



**A Discourse Concerning
The Holy Spirit
John Owen**

PNEUMATOLOGIA

OR

A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT

IN WHICH

AN ACCOUNT IS GIVEN OF HIS NAME, NATURE,

PERSONALITY, DISPENSING, OPERATIONS,

AND EFFECTS; HIS WHOLE WORK IN THE OLD AND NEW

CREATION IS EXPLAINED; THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING IT

IS DEFENDED

FROM OPPOSITIONS AND REPROACHES.

THE NATURES ALSO AND NECESSITY OF GOSPEL

HOLINESS; THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRACE AND

MORALITY, OR A SPIRITUAL LIFE UNTO GOD IN

EVANGELICAL OBEDIENCE AND A COURSE OF

MORAL VIRTUES ARE STATED AND DECLARED.

“Search the Scriptures” (Jn. 5:39)

LONDON, 1674

THE HOLY SPIRIT

BY

JOHN OWEN

VOLUME 1

Edited and put into simpler English

By Geoffrey Stonier

All quotations are taken from the King James Bible

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BY THE ORIGINAL EDITOR.

THE year 1674 saw issuing from the press some of the most elaborate productions of our author. Besides his own share in the Communion controversy, he published in the course of that year the second volume of his Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and another folio of equal length and importance, the first part of his work on the Holy Spirit; for what is generally known under the title of "*Owen on the Holy Spirit*" is but the first half of a treatise on that subject. The treatise was completed in successive publications: "*The Reason of Faith*," in 1677; "*The Causes, Ways, and Means of Understanding the Mind of God*," etc., in 1678; "*The Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer*", in 1682; and, in 1693, two posthumous discourses appeared: "*On the Work of the Spirit as a Comforter, and, as he is, the Author of Spiritual Gifts*." From the statements of John Owen himself, in various parts of these works, as well as on the authority of Nathaniel Mather, who wrote the preface to the last of them, we learn that they were all included in one design, and must

be regarded as one entire and uniform work. In Owen's preface to the "*Reason of Faith*", he expressly states —

"It is about three years since I published a book about the dispensing and operations of the Spirit of God. That book was one part only of what I designed on that subject. The consideration of the work of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of illumination, of supplication, of consolation, and as the immediate author of all spiritual offices and gifts, extraordinary and ordinary, is designed for the second part of it."

Uncertain, as he advanced in years, whether he might be spared to finish it, Owen was induced to issue separately the treatises belonging to the second part, according as he was able, under the pressure of other duties, to undertake the preparation and completion of them. They are now for the first time collected and arranged in the order which, it is believed, the author would have written them, assuming, had he lived, that he would have published a full edition of all his discourses on the Holy Spirit, in the form and under the title, of one work. No other liberty, however, is taken with the treatises than simply to number the five of them which were published separately, and which are contained in the second volume, as so many additional books, continuing and completing the discussion of the subject which had been begun and so far prosecuted, in the five previous books embraced in this volume. To all of them, the general designation PNEUMATOLOGY is equally applicable. Thus arranged, and seen in its full proportion, the work amply vindicates the commendation bestowed on it as the most complete exhibition of the doctrine of Scripture on the Person and agency of the Spirit "to be found in any language."

As no author had previously attempted to deal with "the whole economy of the Holy Spirit, with all his adjuncts, operations, and effects", John Owen urged the circumstance in extenuation of any lack of system and logical order in his work. If such an attempt had never previously been made, it is equally true that no successor has been found in this branch of theology who has ventured to compete with Owen in the full and systematic discussion of this great theme. Treatises of eminent ability and value have appeared on separate parts of it; but in the wide range embraced in this work of Owen, as well as in the power, depth, and resources conspicuous in every chapter, it is not merely first, but single and unique in all our religious literature.

The work, as we may gather from various allusions in it, was written in opposition to the rationalism of the early Socinians, especially as represented by three of the Crellius family; and to the mysticism of the Quakers, a sect which had grown in notoriety within thirty years before the publication of this work; and to the irreligion at a time when the derision of all true piety was the passport to royal favour. During the religious fervours of the commonwealth, fanaticism of various kinds appeared. It is no stranger than when genuine coins are minted, and come into circulation, and attempts are made to utter what is counterfeit and base. Against such fanaticism, it was natural that a reaction would follow, and certain divines pandered to the blind prejudice of the times succeeding the Restoration by sarcastic invective against all that was evangelical in the creed of the Puritans, and vital in personal godliness. Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, in his infamous subservience to the malice of the Court against dissent, and even against the common interests of Protestantism, distinguished himself in his assault against the doctrines of grace and the distinctive principles of the Christian faith.

Owen, accordingly, administers to him a rebuke in terms as severe as the calm dignity of his character ever allowed him to employ in controversy; but the foremost aim in his whole work is to discriminate the gracious operations of the Spirit in the hearts of believers from the excesses of fanaticism on the one hand, whether it appeared in the cruder sects of the age, or in the more genial mysticism of the Quakers, when they elevated their subjective

experience of a spiritual light above co-ordinate authority with the objective revelation of God in the Word, and, on the other hand, from the morality which, springing from no gracious principle, scarcely brooked an appeal to the only divine code for the regulation of human conduct.

This comprehensive treatise abounds in more than Owen's usual wordiness — a feature of the work you readers may acknowledge, which can, perhaps, be explained by a consciousness under which the author seems always to labour that he was prosecuting an argument with opponents, rather than dealing with the conscience in a discourse on practical faith. He moved heavily, as if he were panoplied for conflict, rather than girded for useful work. As he proceeds, however, our interest deepens; weighty questions receive clear explanation; practical difficulties are judiciously resolved; and momentous distinctions, such as those between gospel holiness and common morality, and between natural and moral inability, are skilfully presented. Indeed, many points he brings out with sufficient precision, when stripped of the wordiness that handicaps them, are found to be identical with certain modes in the presentation of divine truth which have been seen as the discoveries and improvements of a later theology. No work of the author supplies better evidence of his pre-eminent skill in what may be termed spiritual ethics — in tracing the effect of gracious truth on the conscience, and the varied phases of human feeling as modified by divine grace, and tested by the divine Word — and his reasoning would have been reputed to be highly philosophical if it had not been so very scriptural.

It is with reference to the following work on the Holy Spirit that Cecil, an acute and rather severe judge of books and authors, has observed —

“Owen stands at the head of his class of divines. His scholars will be more profound and enlarged, and better furnished than those of most other writers. His work on the Spirit has been my treasure-house, and one of my very first-rate books.”

A good abridgment of it by the Rev. George Burder has appeared in more than one edition (*Pneumatologia, Abridged, second edition, 1808*).

In 1678, Dr. William Clagett, preacher to the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, and one of his Majesty's chaplains in ordinary, in “*A Discourse concerning the Operation of the Holy Spirit*”, etc., attempted “a confutation of some part of Dr. Owen's work on that subject.” Mr. John Humfrey, in his “*Peaceable Disquisitions*”, having objected to the way in which in which Clagett dealt with Owen on the Spirit, Clagett published another volume, and promised a third on the opinions of the Fathers respecting the points at issue. The manuscript of this last volume was lost in a fire which consumed the house of a friend with whom it had been placed. Henry Stebbing published in 1719 an abridgment of his first two volumes. The principles of his work were not evangelical; a tone of cold scholarship pervades it; and the author seems as much influenced by a desire to differ from Owen as to discover the truth in regard to the points on which they differed.

ANALYSIS

THE FIRST BOOK of the treatise is devoted to considerations of a *general* and *preliminary* nature. The promise of spiritual gifts contained in Scripture is examined; and occasion is thus taken to illustrate the importance of sound views on the doctrine of the Spirit from the place it holds in Scripture; from the abuses practiced under his name; from certain pretences that were urged to inward light, inconsistent with the claims of the Spirit of God; from many dangerous opinions which had become prevalent respecting his work and influence; and from the opposition directly offered to the Spirit and his work in the world, chap. 1.

The name and titles of the Holy Spirit are next considered in chap. 2.

The evidence of his divine nature and personality follows, from the formula of our initiation into the covenant (Mat. 28:19); from the visible sign of his personal existence (Mat. 3:16); from the personal properties ascribed to him; from the personal acts he performs; and from those acts towards him on the part of men which imply his personality.

A short proof of his Godhead from the divine names he receives, and the divine properties ascribed to him, is added to the argument to illustrate his personality, chap. 3.

The work of the Spirit in the old creation, with reference to the heavens, to the earth, to man, and to the continued sustaining of the universe, is fully explained, chap. 4.

The dispensing of the Spirit is illustrated with reference to the Father as *giving*, *sending* him, etc., and with reference to his own voluntary and personal agency as *proceeding*, *coming*, etc., chap. 5.

In the SECOND BOOK, the particular operations of the Holy Spirit under the Old Testament, and in *preparation* for the new, are considered, such as prophecy, inspiration, miracles, and other gifts, chap. 1.

The importance of the Holy Spirit in the new creation is proved by the fact that he is the subject of the great promise in sacred Scripture respecting New Testament times, chap. 2.

His work with regard to Christ is unfolded under a **twofold** aspect —

1. As it bore on *himself*, in framing his human nature, chap. 3; sanctifying it in the instant of conception, filling it with needful grace, anointing it with extraordinary gifts, conveying to it miraculous powers, guiding, comforting, and supporting Christ, enabling him to offer

himself without spot to God, preserving his human nature in the state of death, raising it from the grave, and finally glorifying it.

And —

2. As he secures, throughout successive ages, a sound and explicit testimony to the Person and work of Christ, chap. 4.

General considerations are urged regarding the work of the Spirit in the new creation, as it relates to the mystical body of Christ — that is, all believers, chap. 5.

The THIRD BOOK is occupied with the subject of *regeneration* as the special work of the Spirit; it is shown not to consist in baptism merely, or external reformation, or enthusiastic raptures, chap. 1.

The operations of the Spirit preparatory to regeneration are exhibited, such as illumination, conviction, etc., chap. 2.

Two important chapters of a digressive character follow, in which the condition of man by nature is stated, as spiritually blind and impotent, chap. 3, and as spiritually dead, chap. 4. The true nature of regeneration is illustrated next — first *negatively*, under which head it is proved not to consist in any result of moral persuasion, moral persuasion being defined, and the extent of its power being fixed.

No change it can effect can be viewed as tantamount to regeneration, because —

1. It leaves the will undetermined.
2. It imparts no supernatural strength.
3. It is not all we pray for when we pray for efficient grace.
4. And does not actually produce regeneration or conversion.

Regeneration is then considered *positively*, as implying all the moral operation that means can effect; and not only a moral but a physical immediate operation of the Spirit, and the irresistibility of this internal efficiency on the minds of men. After explanations to the effect that the Holy Spirit in regeneration acts according to our mental nature, and does not act upon us by an influence such as inspiration, and offers no violence to the will, **three** arguments in support of this view of regeneration are given — from the provision of faith by the power of God, from the victorious efficacy of internal grace as attested by Scripture, and from the nature of the work itself as described under various terms in Scripture, such as “quickenings”, “regeneration”, etc., and also from the terms in which the effect of grace on the different faculties of the soul is represented, chap. 5.

The manner of conversion is then explained in the example of Aurelius Augustine, an account by that eminent father of his own conversion being selected to illustrate both the outward means of conversion, and the various degrees and effects of spiritual influence on the human mind, chap. 6.

The FOURTH BOOK discusses the doctrine of *sanctification*, which is exhibited as the process completing what the act of regeneration has begun. A general view is then given of the nature of sanctification, and of what it consists, chap. 1.

In external dedication, chap. 2.

In internal purification —

1. Its progressive character is unfolded.

2. That it is a gracious process, extending to believers only, is proved, chap. 3.

Sanctification, so far as it relates to the removal of spiritual defilement, is illustrated; and that man cannot purge himself from his natural depravity is proved, chap. 4.

It is shown how the Spirit and the blood of Christ are effective in the purging of the heart and conscience, the Spirit powerfully, the blood of Christ meritoriously, faith as the instrumental cause, and afflictions as a subordinate instrument, chap. 5.

The positive work of sanctification follows, embracing evidence of two propositions —

1. That the Spirit implants a supernatural habit and principle, enabling believers to obey the divine will, and differing from all natural habits, intellectual or moral.

2. That grace is required for every act of acceptable obedience. Under the first proposition, **four** things are considered — the reality of the principle asserted; its nature in inclining the will; the power as well as the inclination it imparts; and, lastly, its specific difference from all other habits, chap. 6.

Under the second proposition, the acts and duties of holiness are reviewed, and proof supplied for the necessity of grace in them, chap. 7.

The nature of the mortification of sin, as a special part of sanctification, is considered; directions for this spiritual exercise are given; particular means for the mortification of sin are specified; and certain errors regarding this duty are corrected, chap. 8.

The FIFTH BOOK simply contains arguments for the *necessity of holiness* —

From the nature of God, chap. 1.

From eternal election, chap. 2.

From the divine commands, chap. 3.

From the mission of Christ, chap. 4.

From our condition in this world, chap. 5.

TO THE READERS

A general account of the nature and design of the discourse to follow, with the reasons why it is made public at this time being given in the first chapter of the treatise itself, I shall

not long detain the readers here at the beginning. But there are some things it is necessary to make you acquainted with, both as to the matter contained in it, and the way it is handled. The subject-matter of the whole, as the title and almost every page of the book declares, is the Holy Spirit of God and his operations. And there are **two** things which are sufficient to make the subject either difficult on the one hand, or unpleasant on the other, to be dealt with in this way, both of which we have to contend with. For where the subject itself is complex and mysterious, the handling of it cannot pass without difficulty; and where it has fallen, by any means whatever, into public contempt and scorn, there comes a sense of satisfaction in a consideration and defence of it. Now, all that concerns the Holy Spirit plays a prominent part in the “mystery” or “deep things of God”; for as the knowledge of them wholly depends on, and is regulated by, divine revelation, so they are, in their own nature, divine and heavenly — distant and remote from all things that the heart of man, in the mere exercising of its own reason or understanding, can rise to. But yet, on the other hand, there is nothing in the world that is more generally despised as foolish and contemptible than the things that are spoken of, and ascribed to, the Spirit of God. The spiritual man needs no help in losing his reputation with many, as a fanatic, estranged from the conduct of reason, and all generous principles of life, who dares avow an interest in the Spirit’s work, or takes upon himself a defence of him.

Wherefore, these things must be a little spoken about, if only to show from where relief may be had against the discouragements with which they are attended.

For the first thing proposed, it must be granted that the things here dealt with are in themselves mysterious and difficult to understand. But yet, the way in which we may attempt an acquaintance with them “according to the measure of the gift of Christ to everyone” (Eph. 4:7) is made plain in the Scriptures of truth. If this way is neglected or despised, all other ways of attempting the same end, be they never so vigorous or promising, will prove ineffective. What belongs to it, as to the inward frame and disposition of mind in those that search after an understanding of these things, what concerns the outward use of means, what concerns the performance of spiritual duties, what concerns conformity in the whole soul to each discovery of truth that is attained, is not my present task to declare, nor shall I be diverted. If God gives an opportunity to deal with the work of the Holy Spirit, enabling us to understand the Scriptures, or the mind of God in them, the whole of this way will be declared at length.

At present, it is sufficient to observe that God, who, in himself, is the eternal original spring and fountain of all truth, is also the only sovereign cause and author of his revelation to us. And, whereas that truth, which originally is one in him, is of various sorts and kinds according to the variety of the things that relate to its communication to us, so the ways and means of that communication are suited to the distinct nature of each particular truth. The truth of things *natural* is made known from God by the exercise of reason, or the due application of the understanding that is in man for their investigation; for “the things of a man knoweth the spirit of a man that is in him.” (1 Cor. 2:11) Neither, ordinarily, is there anything more required for that degree of certainty of knowledge of things of that nature, of which our minds are capable, except the diligent application of the faculties of our soul in the right use of proper means for such an attainment. Yet there is a secret work of the Spirit of God here, even in the communication of skill and ability in things natural, as also in things *civil, moral, political, and artificial*; as our following discourse will show. But whereas these things belong to the work of the old creation and its preservation, or the rule and government of mankind in this world merely as rational creatures, there is no use of means, no communication of aids, spiritual or supernatural, absolutely necessary to be exercised or granted about them. Thus, knowledge and wisdom in things of this nature are distributed here and there among all sorts of people according to the foundation of their

natural abilities, and its superstructure in their diligent exercise, without any particular application to God for special grace or assistance, which still reserves liberty for the sovereignty of divine Providence, put at the disposal of all men and their concerns.

But as for things supernatural, the knowledge and truth of them, the teachings of God, are of another nature; and, in the same way, a special application of ourselves to him for instruction is required. In these things, also, there are degrees, according as we approach, on the one hand, the infinite abyss of the divine essence and existence — such as the eternal generation and incarnation of the Son, and the procession and mission of the Holy Spirit — or, on the other hand, those divine effects which are produced in our souls, which are open to experience.

According to these degrees, as divine condescension is displayed in their revelation, so ought our attention in the exercise of faith and humility, when prayer should be increased in our inquiries after them. For although all that diligence in the use of outward means, necessary for the attainment of the knowledge of any other useful truth, are indispensably required in pursuit of an acquaintance with these spiritual things also; yet, if, moreover, there is not an addition of spiritual ways and means suited to their own nature, and appointed by God, for the reception of supernatural light, and an understanding of the deep things of God, then our labour will, to a great extent, prove fruitless and unprofitable. For although the letter of Scripture, and the sense of the propositions there, are equally exposed to the reason of all mankind, yet the real spiritual knowledge of these things themselves is not communicated to anyone except by a special operation of the Holy Spirit. Nor does any considerable degree of insight into the doctrine of their mysteries make them attainable except by a proper waiting upon him who alone gives “the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of them” (Eph. 1:17); for, as I said earlier, “the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God” (1 Cor. 2:11), and those things that are revealed by him. Neither can the Scriptures be interpreted rightly except with the aid of that Spirit through whom they were written down, as Eusebius Jerome affirms, and as I shall later fully prove. But in the use of the means mentioned, we need not despair, for seeing that these things themselves are revealed that we may know God in the right way, and live for him as we ought, we will attain such a measure of spiritual understanding in them as is useful to our own and others’ edification. They may, I say, do so who are not lazy in hearing or learning, but “by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:14)

Wherefore, the subject of the following discourses being entirely concerning things of this nature, in their several degrees of access to God or ourselves, I shall give no account of any particular attempts in my inquiries of them, but leave the judgement of them to the evidence of the effects produced by them. Only, I must admit, I don’t know any who ever went before me in this attempt to present the whole economy of the Holy Spirit, with all his adjuncts, operations, and effects, of which this is the first volume (the attempts of the Crellius family in this being only to corrupt the truth in a few instances), so the difficulty of my work increased, which is my excuse if anything is found not to fulfil so regular a project, or just a method as to what the nature of the subject requires and was aimed at. In the first part of my work, which concerns the name, divine nature, personality, and mission of the Holy Spirit, I declare and defend the faith of the catholic church against the Socinians; with what advantage, and with what contribution, of light or evidence, strength or order, and what has been argued before by others, is left to my learned readers to judge and determine. And in what concerns the adjuncts and properties of his mission and operation, some may, and I hope they do, judge themselves not un-beholden to me for leading them into deeper and better thoughts about the subject.

The second part of my task concerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the *old creation*, both in its production, preservation and rule. And as I did not have the advantage of any single author, ancient or modern, to beat out the paths of truth before me, I have limited myself to the clear testimonies of Scripture, with such expositions of them as will sufficiently provide evidence of their own truth; though, also, they do not lack support from others that may give them the reputation of some authority. The same can be said of what comes next concerning *his work under the New Testament*, preparatory for the new creation, by the communication of all sorts of gifts, ordinary and extraordinary, all kinds of skill and ability in things spiritual, natural, moral, artificial, and political, with the way in which these operations are confirmed. All these things, many of which are been handled by others elsewhere, are here proposed in their order with regard to their proper end and design. For what concerns his work as *the head of the new creation*, or the human nature in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have been careful to keep severely within the limits of serious study, and not indulge in any curious or unwarranted speculation. I have, therefore, not only diligently attended to the doctrine of Scripture, our only infallible rule and guide, but also carefully considered what was taught and believed in the ancient church in this matter, from which I know that I have not deviated.

Moreover, I shall not add to the first difficulty, to which an effort of this kind is directed, arising from the nature of the subject being dealt with. The other, concerning the contempt that is heaped by many on all these things, is yet to be addressed.

In all the dispensations of God towards his people *under the Old Testament*, there was nothing of good communicated to them, nothing of worth or excellence produced in them or by them, but was expressly assigned to the Holy Spirit as the author and cause of it. Yet, of all the promises given them concerning a better and more glorious state of the church to be introduced later, next to that of the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, those were the most eminent features which concerned an enlargement and fuller communication of the Spirit beyond what they were, or could, in their imperfect state, be made partakers of. Accordingly, we find in the New Testament that, whatever is about the conversion of the elect, the edification of the church, the sanctification and consolation of believers, the performance of those duties of obedience we owe to God, together with our conduct in all their ways, is, in general and in particular instances, all down to him, as it is declared that nothing of it, of any kind, can be enjoyed or performed without his special operation, aid, and assistance.

So careful was God to fully instruct and secure the faith of the church in these matters, because he himself knew her eternal concerns lay here. Yet, in the face of all the evidence given out, the church of God, in most ages, has experienced opposition, either to the Spirit's Person, or his work, or the way he does things, contrary to what is promised and declared in the Word of truth; nor has it yet stopped. Yes, though the contradictions of some people in former ages have been fierce and relentless, yet all that has fallen away and proved very short compared with what has come to pass in the days in which we live; for, not to mention the Socinians, who have gathered into a conspiracy, or rather one ulcerous abscess, all the violent opposition to his deity or grace by the Photinians, Macedonians, and Pelagians of old, there are others, who, professing no opposition to his divine Person, indeed, even admit and own the doctrine of the church concerning it, are yet ready, on all occasions, to despise and reproach that whole work for which he was promised in the Old Testament, and which is expressly assigned to him in the New.

Hence, it has become among many a matter of reproach and scorn for anyone to mention his grace, or profess an interest in his work, without which, no one shall see God, if the Scripture bears a faithful testimony. And some have taken the trouble to prove that several

things that are expressly assigned to him in the gospel, as effects of his power and grace, are, as they call it, only filthy “enthusiasms”, or, at least, the product of weak imaginations and unhinged minds. Neither is there any end to slanderous charges from those by whom his work is disallowed and his grace denied. Yes, the condition of many in this is such that, if it were not known how effective the efforts of profaneness are in the corrupted minds of men, it would seem rather ridiculous to despise it, and to deserve any serious notice. For let any avow or plead for the known work of the Spirit of God, that it is immediately considered sufficient grounds to charge them with quitting the rule of the Word, and attending to other revelations and inspirations, also foregoing all thoughts of the necessity of the duties of obedience. Whereas I plead no other work of his but that alone without which, no one can either attend to the rule of Scripture as he ought, or perform any single duty of obedience to God properly. And there are none of this conspiracy so weak or unlearned but scoff at the mention of the Spirit, and make out the very naming of him by us as a reproach.

Yes, it is well that some have not begun to deal in the same way with the Person of Christ himself; for error and profaneness, if once accepted, produce at all times bad fruit, and are progressive, and will be so while darkness and corruption remains in men’s minds, where the great adversary is able, by his subtle malice, to make impressions on them. But, in these things, not a few please themselves, despise criticisms from us, and count themselves injured when their so-called Christianity is called into question. But what value is there in that name or title of the Spirit, when the whole mystery of the gospel is excluded from our spiritual experience? Take away the dispensing of the Spirit, and his effective operations in all our communion between God and man, how can they be so ashamed to avow or profess the work attributed to him in the gospel? For then, Christianity would have been plucked up by the roots. Yes, this practical contempt of the work of the Holy Spirit having sprung up, the only plausible defiance of the faith proves to be the most tenacious, beyond all mistake and error, concerning the life and work of the Holy Spirit, being constantly accompanied by profaneness, and commonly leading to atheism. Here, we find the rise and spring of that stated apostasy away from the power of evangelical truth, where the world takes liberty to immerse itself in all sorts of gross excess in life and living, the end of which we cannot expect but with dread and terror.

To ease these evils to any extent; to vindicate the truth and reality of divine spiritual operations in the church; to avow what is believed and taught concerning the Holy Spirit and his work, who are most abused and rejected for their very profession; thus proving the iniquity of those scandals in the darkness and shades of which some seek to make a name for themselves, by their profane scoffing at his whole dispensation. However, we show in all instances that what is ascribed to the Spirit is not only consistent with the true faith, but also without which the faith cannot survive, nor the power of it preserved — that is the main purpose of the following ten discourses.

Now, whereas the effective operation of the blessed Spirit in the *regeneration* or *conversion* of sinners is, of all other parts of his work, most violently opposed, and has lately been virulently and badly spoken of, I have urged in greater detail. And because it can neither be well understood, nor duly explained, without considering the state of *lapsed or corrupted nature*, I have taken up that also, judging it necessary to do so. For whereas the knowledge of it is the foundation of all our obedience to God in Christ, it has always been the design of some, and still continues to be, either wholly to deny it, or cause it to lead to the suppression and almost annihilation of the grace of the gospel, by which our natures can be repaired. Desiring, then, to deal clearly with the repairing of our nature by grace, it is, on all accounts, also necessary for me to deal with its depravation by sin.

Moreover, what I have to say about these things is best suited to the edification of those who believe, directing them in their furtherance of true spiritual obedience and holiness, or their obedience of faith. Hence, it may be, some will judge that our discourses on these subjects are rather drawn out to a greater length than is needful or convenient by that continual mixture of practical applications which runs alongside them all. But if you are pleased to consider that my purpose was not to handle these things by way of controversy, but to declare and confirm the truth concerning them to suit the doctrines dealt with in the practice of them, and that I dare not deal with things of this nature in any other way but to promote the edification of the body of believers. You will either be of my mind, or, it may be without much difficulty, accept my excuse. However, if these things are neglected or despised by some, yes, be they never so many, there are yet others who will judge my main concern in these discourses is to direct and encourage you my readers in the holy practice of their duty. And, whereas the way, manner, and method of the Holy Spirit, in his work of translating sinners from death to life, from a state of nature to that of grace, have been variously handled by some other authors, and severely dealt with or scorned by others, I have attempted to declare and assert what Scripture clearly teaches about these matters, confirming them with the testimonies of some of the ancient writers of the church, as I no way doubt is best suited to the experience of those who have, in their own souls, been made partakers of that blessed work of the Holy Spirit. And while, in the substance of what I have to say, I have the clear testimonies of Scripture, the support of the ancient church, and the experience of those who sincerely believe to fall back on, I shall not be greatly moved by the censures and opposition of those who are otherwise minded.

I shall add no more under this heading but that, whereas the only inconvenience with which our doctrine is pressed, is the pretended difficulty of reconciling the nature and necessity of our duty with the power of the grace of the Spirit, I have been so far from waiving a consideration of it, that I have embraced every opportunity to examine it in great detail where it may be urged with the greatest appearance of need. And it is, I hope, at length, made to appear that not only the necessity of our duty is consistent with the power of God's grace, but also, that, on the one hand, we can perform no duty to God as we ought without his aid and assistance, nor receive any encouragement to attempt a course of obedience without a proper expectation of the Spirit's work in us on the other hand, the work of grace itself is in no way effective except in our compliance with it by way of duty. Only, with the permission of some people, whether they will or not, we give the pre-eminence in all to grace, and not to ourselves. The command of God is the measure and rule of our industry and diligence by way of duty; and why anyone should be discouraged from the exercise of that industry which God requires from him by a consideration of the aid and assistance which he has promised to him, I cannot understand. The work of obedience is difficult, and is of the highest importance; so that if anyone might possibly be backward in this, God will help and assist him. I think our critics' attitude is because they hate it, they don't like it. Let others do what they please, I shall try to comply with the apostle's advice on the urgent attention he gives to it — "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12)

These things, with many of similar nature, falling unavoidably under my consideration, have drawn out these discourses to a length much beyond my first desire; which is also the occasion why I have postponed to another volume the present addition to them of those other parts of the work of the Holy Spirit in *prayer* or *supplication*, in *illumination* with respect to the belief of the Scriptures, in a *right understanding of the mind of God* in them, in the *consolation of believers*, and in the *communication of gifts* to the church. These

must now wait for later, if God, in his goodness and patience, is pleased to give me the time.

Another part of the work of the Holy Spirit consists in our *sanctification*, on which our evangelical obedience or holiness depend. How much all his operations in this are, by some, despised, what attempts there have been to debase the nature of gospel-obedience, yes, to cast it out of the hearts and lives of Christians, and substitute a heathenish honesty, at best, in its place, is not unknown to any who think it their duty to inquire into these things. Hence, I thought it not unnecessary, on the occasion of dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification, to make a diligent and full inquiry into the true nature of *evangelical holiness* and that spiritual life in God for which all believers are created in Christ Jesus. And here, following the conduct of the Scriptures from first to last, the difference between them, and that exercise of *moral virtue* which some plead for in their place, so evidently reveals itself, in that it needs no great effort to present it to any impartial judgement. Only, in the handling of these things, I thought it fit to pursue my former method and design, and, mainly with regard to the reduction of the doctrines insisted on, and the practice and improvement of holiness — this also has brought about a lengthening of these discourses. I don't doubt that all these things will be despised by some. They can't help themselves, and their exposure by me will not bring them to a better acceptance. But let them please themselves, while they can see good in their own intentions; while Scripture is admitted to be an infallible declaration of the will of God and the nature of spiritual things, and there are Christians remaining in the world who try to live for God, and come to an enjoyment of him by Jesus Christ, there will never lack sufficient testimony against that putrid figment of moral virtue which is their view of gospel holiness, or that the repairing of our natures and life for God consists in this alone.

In the last place, I have included a discourse on *the necessity of holiness and obedience*. Some regard, I must confess, must be paid to the fact that I had for this discourse, though not much, the ridiculous clamours of malevolent and ignorant people, criticising us, who plead for the power of the grace of God and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, with taking away the need for a holy life. For who would much trouble himself about an accusation which is loaded with as many convictions of its forgery as there are people who sincerely believe those teachings, and to which common light bears testimony in the lives of those by whom they are received, and not in the lives by which they are despised? It was the importance of the thing itself, made particularly timely by the many temptations of the days in which we live, which spurred me on to add something about the nature of evangelical holiness; seeing "...if we know these things, happy are we if we do them." (Jn. 13:17) But yet, the main arguments and demonstrations of that necessity being drawn from the doctrines of the gospel on which some charge us with casting no good aspect, these lies are also made apparent. And, thus far, we have proceeded in the declaration and vindication of the "despised" work of the Spirit of God under the New Testament, referring the remaining instances mentioned earlier for another occasion.

The opposition to all that we believe and maintain here are of two sorts — **firstly**, those that consist of particular exceptions against, and objections to, each particular work of the Spirit, whether in the communication of gifts, or the operation of grace; and **secondly**, those that consist in reflections cast on the whole work ascribed to him in general. Those of the first sort will, all of them, come under scrutiny in their proper places, when we come to deal with those actions of the Spirit to which they are greatly opposed. The other sort, at least most of them, with which some make the greatest noise in the world, may be briefly mentioned here.

The foremost and chief pretence of this nature is that all those who plead for the effective operations of the Holy Spirit in the illumination of men's minds, the repairing of their

natures, the sanctification of their persons, and their endowment with spiritual gifts, are enemies of *reason*, and bring down the reputation of it in the faith, or at least do not give it that place and exercise which is its due. Hence, some of those who are otherwise minded affirm that it reflects on them like a reproach, that they are *rational divines*; although, as far as I can see, if that is so, it is like Eusebius Jerome being beaten by an angel for being a Ciceronian [after the Roman orator Cicero] in the judgement of some, very undeservedly. But the grounds on which this charge should be made good have not, as yet, made their appearance; neither has it been proved that anything is ascribed by us to the power of God's grace is in the least derogatory to reason, its use, or any duty of man depending on it. I suppose we are agreed in this, that the reason of man, in the state in which we have been created, is not sufficient in itself to find out or frame a faith by which we may please God and be accepted by him; or if we are not agreed in this, yet I will not admit it as a part of our present controversy, in which we grant a faith proceeding from, and resolved into, supernatural revelation. Neither has it (that I know of) yet been pleaded by any that reason is able to take in all the things in their nature and being, or can search them out to perfection, those that are revealed to us; for we do not directly deal with those by whom the principal mysteries of the gospel are rejected, because they cannot comprehend them under the pretence that what is above reason is against reason.

And, it may be granted, moreover, that natural reason cannot enable the mind of a man to have a saving perception of spiritual things as revealed, without the special aid of the Spirit of God to illumine us. If this is denied by any, and we acknowledge that they dissent from us, we know that we do no injury to reason by it, and would rather suffer under the charge of doing so, than by renouncing Scripture and turning infidel, that we may be counted *rational*. But we cannot conceive how reason should be prejudiced by the advancement of the rational faculties of our souls by their exercise towards their proper objects — which is all we assign to the work of the Holy Spirit in this matter; and there are none in the world freer to grant that than we are. Our reason is the only judge of the sense and truth of propositions drawn from Scripture, or proposed there, and I wish that all might be left in peace under that conclusion, where we know our critics must rest, whether they will or not.

But the inquiry into this matter comes to this —

“What reasonableness appears in the mysteries of our faith when revealed to our reason, and what ability have we to receive, believe, and obey them?”

The latter part of this inquiry into our ability is so fully described in the following discourses that I shall not go through it here; the former in relation to reason may, in a few words, be dismissed. It cannot be, it is not that I know of, denied by any, that the Christian faith is highly reasonable; for it is the effect of the infinite reason, understanding, and wisdom of God. But the question is not what it is in itself, but what it is in relation to our reason, or how things appears to us. And there is no doubt that everything in the Christian faith appears highly reasonable to enlightened reason, or to the mind of man affected by that work of grace in its renovation, which is so directly ascribed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture. For as there is a compatibility between an enlightened mind and spiritual mysteries as revealed, and seeing them in their proper light, it finds by experience their necessity, use, goodness, and benefit, with respect to our chief good and supreme end. There remains, therefore, only this —

“We are left to inquire how reasonable the mysteries of the Christian faith are to the minds of men corrupted by sin; for that is how they are by the coming of sin, as we believe, and so we will prove in the following treatise.

It is in vain to dispute with anyone about the reasonableness of the evangelical faith and obedience until the state and condition of our reason is agreed on. In this case, to speak plainly, we acknowledge that reason, in its corrupted state, is all that anyone has in that state by which he can understand and judge the sense and truth of doctrines revealed in, and, with the use of such aids and means as it is capable of receiving improving, is more and better for him than any judge or interpreter who should impose a meaning on the Spirit not suitable for him. As for the spiritual things themselves of the gospel, by their own nature, their minds are at *enmity* against them, and they are *foolishness* to them. If, then, it is, according to our critics, a “crime”, if it reveals a judgement and disadvantage against reason in affirming that our minds stand in need of the renovation of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to understand spiritual things in a spiritual way, we do indeed acknowledge ourselves guilty. But otherwise, in asserting the powerful operations of the Spirit of God, and the necessity of them in the discharge of every spiritual duty towards God in an acceptable way, we deny that the use and exercise of our own reasons in things religious and spiritual where it is capable, and where God has appointed it, is unjustly charged against us, as I shall later fully show.

But it is, moreover, pretended that, by the operations we ascribe to the Holy Spirit, we expose others to be deceived by *satanic delusions*, and open the door to “enthusiasms”, directing them to the guidance of unaccountable impulses and revelations, thus paving the way for all folly and villainy. By what means this charge can be directed towards those who professedly avow that nothing is good, nothing can be duty to us, nothing acceptable to God, but what is warranted by the Scripture, and is directed to us, and suited to us, which is alone the perfect rule of all that God requires of us by way of obedience, is a mystery to me. We are made the subject only of an unfounded outrage, that has, as yet, not been put up for examination; for all things of this nature are not only condemned by Scripture, but, for us, are things we teach concerning the Holy Spirit of God, and are the main ways and means by which we are saved from the danger of such critics. It is true, there were of old, and unhappily they still continue in some, satanic delusions, diabolical suggestions, and foul enthusiasms, which pretend to come from the Spirit of God, and to be of a divine origin; for so it is plainly taught in Scripture, both under the Old Testament and the New, sufficient directions there either for their discovery or their expulsion. But if we must, then, reject the true and real operations of the Spirit of God, the main preservative against our being deceived by the other sort, we might as well reject the owning of God himself, because the devil has imposed himself on mankind as the object of their worship.

Wherefore, as to enthusiasms of any kind, which might possibly give ground to any diabolical suggestions, we are so far from affirming any operations of the Holy Spirit to consist of them, or in anything like them, that we will not allow any pretence of them to be used in the argument. And we have a sure rule by which to test all these things; which, as we are bound in all such cases to do, so God has promised the assistance of his Spirit that we may not be deceived, and this we do in all sincerity. What some mean by “*impulses*”, I don’t know. If it comes to special aids, assistances, and inclinations to duties, which are acknowledged to be such, and the duties of people so assisted and inclined, and these made especially useful to us in our present circumstances, it requires no small caution that, when they appear under a heretical name, we do not reject those supplies of grace which are promised to us, and which we are bound to pray for. But if irrational impressions, or violent inclinations to things or actions which are not acknowledged duties in themselves, proved by the Word of truth, and so to the people affected in their present condition and circumstances, are put forward, that we should utterly abandon them; and there is no alternative given for anything that we believe concerning the Holy Spirit and his operations. For the whole work we assign to him is nothing but what we are enabled to perform in obedience to God, and which is required in Scripture, in the way and manner it

is required; and it is probably more out of enmity to him than us, as far as opposition is concerned.

The same may be said about "*revelations*". They are of **two** sorts — objective and subjective. Those of the former sort, whether they contain doctrines contrary to Scripture, or additions to them, or seem to confirm them, they are all universally to be rejected, the former being absolutely false, the latter useless. Neither have any of the operations of the Spirit pleaded for the least of them; for he, having finished the whole work of external revelation, and embedded it in the Scriptures, his whole internal spiritual work is suited to it, and is proportional to it. By subjective revelations, nothing is meant but that work of spiritual illumination by which we are enabled to discern and understand the mind of God in the Scriptures; which the apostle prays for on behalf of all believers (Eph. 1:16-19), and whose nature, God assisting, will be fully explained later. So little pretence, then, there is in this charge on those by whom the powerful operations of the Spirit of God are asserted, as, that, without them, we have no absolute security that will preserve us from being imposed on by them, or some of them.

But, it may be, it will be said at last that our whole labour, in declaring the work of the Spirit of God in us and towards us, as well as what I have said in vindication against these or similar charges which are altogether vain, for all they do or say is nothing but arguing with unintelligible expressions. Some make their charge, indeed, even before they have produced their charter in which they are constituted the sole judges of what words, what expressions, what ways of teaching, are proper in things of this nature. But, by anything that has yet appeared, they seem to be as unfit for the exercise of that dictatorship to which they pretend as any sort of men that ever undertook the declaration of things sacred and spiritual. Wherefore, unless they come with better authority than as yet they pretend to, and give a better example of their own way and manner of teaching such things than they have done, we will continue to make Scriptural phraseology our rule and pattern in the declaration of spiritual things, and conform all our expressions to the Scriptures, whether they appear to our critics intelligible or not, and that for reasons so easy to be conceived, that they need not here be pressed.

BOOK 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PRINCIPLES CONCERNING
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS WORK

1 Corinthians 12:1 opened — PNEUMATIKA (spiritual gifts) — Their grant for use and abuse in that church — Jesus, how called “anathema” — Impiety of the Jews — How called “Lord” — The foundation of church order and worship — In what sense we are enabled by the Spirit to call Jesus “Lord” — The Holy Spirit the author of all gifts — why called “God,” and “the Lord” — General distribution of spiritual gifts — Proper end of their communication — Nine sorts of gifts — Abuse of them in the church — Their tendency to peace and order — General design of the following discourse concerning the Spirit and his being dispensed — Importance of the doctrine concerning the Spirit of God and his operations — Reasons for this — Promise of the Spirit to supply the absence of Christ, as to his human nature — Concerns in this — Work of the Spirit in the ministry of the gospel — All saving good communicated to us and worked in us by him — Sin against the Holy Spirit unforgiveable — False pretences to the Spirit dangerous — Pretences to the spirit of prophecy under the Old Testament — Two sorts of false prophets: the first sort; the second sort — Pretenders under the New Testament — The rule for the testing of such pretenders (1 Jn. 4:1-3) — Rules for this purpose under the Old and New Testaments compared — A false spirit, set up against the Spirit of God, examined — False and dangerous opinions concerning the Spirit, and how to be rid them — Reproaches of the Spirit and his work — Principles and occasions of the apostasy of churches under the law and gospel — Dispensing of the Spirit not limited to the first ages of the church — The great necessity of a diligent inquiry into what is taught concerning the Spirit of God and his work.

THE apostle Paul, in the twelfth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, shows how to exercise spiritual gifts, concerning which, among other things and emergencies, they had asked him. Here are the firm words with which he prefaces his whole discourse — “Now, concerning spiritual gifts.” And the imagination of some concerning the spiritually-minded people here, contrary to the sense of all the ancients, is inconsistent with the context, for as it was about spiritual gifts and their exercise, which the church had asked him about, the whole of his following discourse is directed toward them. Therefore, at the close of it, he lays out the design of the whole, and does it with this advice — “Covet earnestly the best gifts” — namely, among those he proposed to deal with, and had done so accordingly in verse 31. The *pneumatika* of verse 1 are the *charismata* of verse 31; and, as it is expressed, in 1 Cor. 14:1 — “Desire spiritual gifts”, whose nature and use I have now instructed you in, as I said at the beginning. Of these, the Corinthian church had received an abundant measure, especially those that were *extraordinary*, and tended towards the conviction of unbelievers: for the Lord having “much people in that city” whom he intended to call to the faith (Acts 18:9-10), not only encouraged our apostle against all fears and dangers, to begin and carry on the work of preaching there, which lasted “a year and six months” (11), but also furnished the first converts with such eminent, and some of them, such miraculous gifts, that might provide a suitable means for the conversion of many others. For he will never be lacking in providing instruments and suitable means for the effective attaining of any end that he was aiming at. Concerning the use, exercise, and management of these “spiritual gifts”, the church, or some of the principal members of it, had fallen into much confusion, and abused them for the purpose of self-expression and personal ambition, from which other evils resulted; for the best of God’s gifts may be abused by the evil desires of men, as the purest water may be polluted by the earthen vessels into which it is poured. Upon the information of some who, loving truth, peace, and order, were troubled at this confusion (1 Cor. 1:11), and in answer to a letter from the whole church, written to him about these and other occurrences (1 Cor. 7:1), he provides them with counsel and advice on how to rectify these abuses.

First, to prepare them rightly with humility and thankfulness, which becomes those that are entrusted with such excellent privileges they had abused, and, without which, they could not receive the instruction he intended to give them, he reminds them of their former state and condition before their calling and conversion to Christ (1 Cor. 12:2) — “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away with dumb idols, even as ye were led” — disturbed by violent impressions from the devil in the service of idols. This he mentions, not to reproach them, but to let them know what frame of mind, and what fruit of life, might be expected from those that had received such an alteration in their condition. Particularly, as he elsewhere tells them, if they had not made themselves different from others, if they had nothing but what they had received, they should not boast or exalt themselves above others, as though they had not received anything (1 Cor. 4:7); for it is a vain thing for a man to boast in himself of what he has freely received from another, and never deserved it, as it is with all who have received either gifts or grace from God.

This alteration of their state and condition he declares to them by its effects and author of it — “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:3) The great difference which was then in the world concerned Jesus, who was preached to them all. Unbelievers, who were still carried along by an *impetus* of mind and heart towards “dumb idols” (1 Cor. 12:2), being led and acted upon by the spirit of the devil, blasphemed, and said *Jesus was anathema*, or one accursed. They looked on him as a person to be detested and abominated as the common dislike of their gods and followers. Hence, at the mention of him, they used to say, “Jesus anathema”, “He is, or let him be, accursed”, detested, and destroyed. And in this blasphemy, the Jews continue to this day, hiding their cursed sentiments under a corrupt pronounciation of his name — that is, “Let his name and memory be blotted out”; the same as “Jesus anathema”. And this blasphemy of pronouncing Jesus *accursed* was how the first persecutors of the church tested the faith of Christians, like Pliny in his letter to Trajan, and Justin Martyr, with other apologists; and as the apostle says, those who said this did not say it “by the Spirit of God.” So he says they did it by the action and instigation of the devil, the unclean spirit, which ruled in the children of disobedience. And this was the condition of those Corinthians themselves to whom he was writing, while they also were carried away by “dumb idols”. On the other side, those who believed used to call Jesus “Lord”, or professed that he was the Lord; and thus avowed their faith in him and obedience to him. Above all, they owned him to be Jehovah, the Lord “over all, God blessed forever, Amen” (Rom. 9:5); for the name Jehovah is everywhere in the New Testament expressed by *Kurios* (Lord), as used here. He who professes Jesus to be the Lord, in the first place, acknowledges him to be the true God. And then they professed him to be their Lord, the Lord of their souls and consciences, to whom they owed all subjection, and performed all obedience, as Thomas did in his great confession, “My Lord and my God!” (Jn. 20:28)

Now, as he had intimated before, those who disowned him, and called him “accursed”, spoke under the instinct and instigation of the devil, by whom they were activated; so he lets them know, on the other hand, that no one can own and confess Jesus to be the “Lord” but by the Holy Spirit. But it may be said that some, activated by an unclean spirit, confessed Christ to be the Lord. So did the man in the synagogue, who cried out, “I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God” (Mk. 1:23-24, 34), and he “suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him”; and the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination cried after the apostle and his companions, saying, “These men are the servants of the most high God.” (Acts 16:17) So also did the man who lived among the tombs, possessed by an unclean spirit, who cried out to him —

“What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?” (Mk. 5:7)

And other similar testimonies from the heathen, and from their oracles, can be produced.

Answer

1. Our apostle speaks of such a saying that Jesus is Lord as being accompanied by faith in him, and subjection of the soul to him; and this comes from the Holy Spirit alone. Thus none acted in this way, for no unclean spirit can call him Lord.

2. These acknowledgments were either —

(1) Produced by the devil, being no small part of his punishment and torment,

(2) Or were designed by him to prejudice the glory of Christ by his testimony, who was a liar from the beginning. (Jn. 8:44)

Malus bonum ubi se simulat, tunc est pessimus.

(“A bad man who pretends to be a good man is the worst man of all”— Publilius Syrus)

These things, then, have no place here. In this way, the apostle informs them of what the foundation of all church relations, order, and worship consist; for whereas they all had respect for the Lordship of Christ in their acknowledgment of it, this was not from themselves, but was a pure result of the operation of the Holy Spirit in them and towards them. And anything similar which does not proceed from the same spring and fountain is of no use in giving glory of God, nor is of any advantage to the souls of men. Some think that this saying of Jesus as Lord must be limited to the manner of speaking insisted on later; for the apostle, in the following verses, deals with those extraordinary gifts which many in that church were then endowed with. None can”, says he, “say ‘Jesus is the Lord’ in an extraordinary manner, with different tongues, and in prophecy, but by the Holy Spirit” — for without his special assistance, none can eminently and miraculously declare him to be so. And if this is so, it is likely that those who said that Jesus was “accursed” were some pretending to be really activated by an extraordinary spirit, which the apostle declared not to be the Spirit of God; and so John Chrysostom interprets the words of those who were visibly and violently activated by the devil. Many such instruments of his malice Satan stirred up in those days to preserve, if possible, his tottering kingdom from ruin. But there is no necessity to limit the words, or fix this meaning on them. Yes, it seems to me inconsistent with the design of the apostle and the scope of the passage: for intending to instruct the Corinthians, as I said, in the nature, use, and exercise of spiritual gifts, he first lays down the spring and fountain of all saving profession of the gospel, which those gifts were designed for its furtherance and improvement.

At present, I shall not say any more, or explain further these words. Frequent reference must be had to them in our progress, where they will be fully explained as to what concerns the Person of the Spirit, his will, and his operations, which are all asserted in them. For my purpose is, through the permission and assistance of God, to deal with the *name, nature, existence*, and whole *work* of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of God through Jesus Christ in the communication of him to the sons of men; a work in itself too great and difficult for me to undertake, and is beyond my ability to manage for the glory of God or the edification of the souls of believers, for “who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. 2:16) But yet I dare not utterly faint in the task nor under it, while I look to him whose work it is, who gives wisdom to those who lack it, and does not reprove them. (Jas. 1:5) Our eyes, therefore, are to him alone, who both supplies seed to the sower and, when he has done,

blessees it with an increase. (Is. 55:10; 2 Cor. 9:10) The present necessity, importance, and usefulness of this work are the things that keep me going. These, then, I shall briefly present with some general considerations before I insist on the things themselves whose special explanation is in hand.

Firstly, then, we will consider that the doctrine of the Spirit of God, his work and grace, is the *second great head* or principle of those gospel truths in which the glory of God and the good of the souls of men are most prominently concerned. And such also is it, that without it — without the knowledge of it in its truth, and the improvement of it in its power — the first will prove useless for those ends. For when God designed the great and glorious work of recovering fallen man, and the saving of sinners, to the praise of the glory of his grace, he appointed, in his infinite wisdom, two of its means. The one was *the giving of his Son for them*, and the other was *the giving of his Spirit to them*. And here was the way made for the manifestation of the glory of the whole blessed Trinity; which is the greatest utmost end of all the works of God. By these means were the love, grace, and wisdom of the Father in the design and projection of the whole; the love, grace, and condescension of the Son, in the execution, purchase, and procurement of grace and salvation for sinners; with the love, grace, and power of the Holy Spirit, in the effective application of all to the souls of men — made fully and gloriously conspicuous. Hence, from the first entrance of sin, there were two general heads of the promise of God to men concerning the means of their recovery and salvation. The one was the sending of his Son to be incarnate, to take our nature on himself, and to suffer for us; the other, concerned the giving of his Spirit, to make the effects and fruits of the incarnation, obedience, and suffering of his Son, effective in us and towards us.

To these heads, all the promises of God may be reduced. Now, the former was to be the foundation of the latter, and was the first to be laid down and most insisted on until it was actually accomplished. Hence, the great promise of the Old Testament, that the principal object of the faith, hope, and expectation of believers, was that concerning the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and the work he was to perform. Yet this also, as we shall see in our progress, was accompanied with a great intermixture of promises concerning the Holy Spirit, to render his coming and work effective in us. But when once that first work was fully accomplished, when the Son of God had come and destroyed the works of the devil, the principal remaining promise of the New Testament, the spring of all the rest, concerned the sending of the Holy Spirit for the accomplishment of his part in that great work which God sent him to do. Hence, the Holy Spirit, the doctrine concerning his Person, his work, his grace, is the most peculiar and principal subject of the Scriptures of the New Testament, and a most eminent immediate object of the faith of those who believe; and this must be further cleared, seeing we have to deal with some who will scarcely allow him to be of any consideration in these matters at all. But I shall be brief in these testimonies, because the whole of this discourse is designed for a demonstration of the truth of this assertion.

It is of great moment, and sufficient in itself to maintain the cause as proposed, that when our Lord Jesus Christ was to leave the world, *he promised to send his Holy Spirit to his disciples to supply his absence*. Of what use the presence of Christ was to his disciples we may in some measure conceive. They knew full well whose hearts were filled with sorrow at the mention of his leaving of them. (Jn. 16:5-6) Desiring to relieve them in this great distress — which drew out the highest expressions of love, tenderness, compassion, and care towards them — he did it principally by this promise; which he assures them should be to their greater advantage than any they would receive by the continuance of his bodily presence amongst them. And to secure them in this, as also to inform them of its great importance, he repeats it frequently to them, and insists they should receive it.

1. Consider something of what he says to this purpose in his last discourse with them —

Jn. 14:16-18 —

“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” (That is, in and by this Holy Spirit)

And verses 25-27 —

“These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you...”

Jn. 15:26 —

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”

Jn. 16:5-15 —

“Now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, ‘Whither goest thou?’ But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you.”

This was the great legacy our Lord Jesus Christ, on his departure from this world, bequeathed to his sorrowful disciples. This he promised them as sufficient relief for all their troubles, and a faithful guide in all their ways. And because of the importance of it to them, he *repeats* it frequently, and enlarges on the benefits they would receive, giving them a particular account why it would be more advantageous for them than his own *bodily presence*. Therefore, after his resurrection, he reminds them again of this promise, commanding them to do nothing towards the building of the church until that promise was fulfilled. (Acts 1:4-5, 8) They would have been embracing his human nature, and rejoicing in it, but, as he said to Mary, “Touch me not” (Jn. 20:17), to wean her off any fleshly consideration of him. He now instructs them all to look for, and trust in, the promise of the Holy Spirit. (Lk. 24:49) This comes after our apostle warned —

“Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.” (2 Cor. 5:16)

For although it was a great privilege to have known Christ in this world after the flesh, yet it was much greater to enjoy him in the dispensing of the Spirit. And this was said by the apostle, as the ancients judged, to rebuke the boasting of some about their seeing the Lord in the flesh, who were then called *desposunoi* (belonging to the Master), and whom he directs to a more excellent knowledge of him.

It is vainly pretended that it was the apostles only, and it may be some of the early Christians, who were involved in this promise, for although the Holy Spirit was bestowed on them in a peculiar manner and for special ends, yet the promise in general belongs to all believers till the end of the world. For as to what concerns his gracious operations, whatever the Lord Christ prayed for them, and so promised them (as the Spirit was procured for them by his prayer (see Jn. 14:16-17), he “prayed not for it for them alone, but for them also who would believe on him through their word.” (Jn. 17:20) And his promise was, to be “with his always, even unto the end of the world” (Mat 28:20); as also, that “wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, there he would be in the midst of them” (Mat. 18:20) — which he cannot be except by his Spirit. As for his human nature, “the heaven must receive him until the times of restitution of all things.” (Acts 3:21) And this one consideration is sufficient to show the importance of the doctrine and things that concern the Holy Spirit; for is it possible that any Christian should be so stupidly negligent and careless, so unconcerned in the things on which his present comforts and future happiness absolutely depend, as not to think it his duty to inquire with the greatest care and diligence into what our Lord Jesus Christ has left us to supply his absence, and, at length, to bring us to himself? He, by whom these things are despised, has neither part nor lot in Christ himself; for “if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9)

2. The great work of the Holy Spirit in the dispensing and *ministering of the gospel*, and to all its ends, is another evidence to the same purpose. Hence, the gospel itself is called “the ministration of the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:8), in opposition to that of the law, which is called the ministration of the letter and of condemnation. The “ministry of the Spirit” is either that ministry which the Spirit makes effective, or that ministry by which the Spirit in his gifts and graces is communicated to men. And this it is that gives to the ministry of the gospel both its glory and its power. Take away the Spirit from the gospel and you make it a dead letter, and leave the New Testament of no more use to Christians than the Old Testament is to the Jews. It is therefore a mischievous imagination, proceeding from ignorance, blindness, and unbelief, that there is no more in the gospel but what is contained under any other doctrine or declaration of truth — that it is nothing but a book for men to exercise their reason in and on, and to improve the things of it by the same faculty of reason: for this is to separate the Spirit, or the dispensing of the Spirit, from it, which is, in truth, to destroy it; and by it is the covenant of God rejected, which is, that his Word and Spirit should go together. (Is. 59:21) We shall, therefore, God assisting us, show in our progress that the whole ministry of the gospel, the whole use and power of it, depends upon that ministry of the Spirit with which, according to the promise of God, it is accompanied. If, therefore, we have any concern in, or have ever received any benefit by, the gospel, or the ministry of it, we have a serious duty before us in the matter in hand.

3. There is no spiritual or *saving benefit* from first to last communicated to us, or of which we are from and by the grace of God made partakers, but it is revealed to us and bestowed on us by the Holy Spirit. He who has not an immediate and special work of the Spirit of God in him and towards him never receives any special love, grace, or mercy, from God. For how should he? Whatever God works in us, and upon us, he does so by his Spirit. He, therefore, who has no work of the Spirit of God in his heart never received either mercy or grace from God, for God does not give them except by his Spirit. A disclaimer, then, of any work of the Spirit of God in us, or upon us is a disclaimer of all

interest in his grace and mercy; and they may do well to consider this, to whom the work of the Spirit of God is a reproach. When they can tell us of any other way by which a man can be made a partaker of mercy and grace, we will pay close attention to it. In the meantime, we will prove from Scripture that the way of the Spirit is the way of God.

4. There is nothing done in us, or by us, that is *holy and acceptable to God* unless it is an effect of the Holy Spirit; it is of his operation in us, and by us. Without him, we can do nothing; for without Christ we cannot (Jn. 15:5), and by him alone is the grace of Christ communicated to us to do its work in us. By him, we are *regenerated*; by him we are *sanctified*; by him we are *cleansed*; by him we are *assisted* in and towards every good work. Particular instances of this will be later urged and proved. And it is our unquestioned concern to inquire into the cause and spring of all that is good in us, by which we shall make a true discovery of the spring and cause of all that is evil. We need a competent knowledge of both, or we can do nothing as we ought.

5. God lets us know that the only peculiarly *un-remedial sin* and way of sinning under the gospel is a *sin, in a special way, against the Holy Spirit*. And this of itself is sufficient to convince us how needful it is for us to be well instructed in what concerns him; for there is something in it that accompanies irrecoverable and eternal ruin. So Mk. 3:28-29 —

“All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness.”

Or —

“Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.” (Mat. 12:32)

There remains nothing for him who sets aside the Spirit of grace but a “certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” (Heb. 10:27, 29) This is that “sin unto death” whose remission is not to be prayed for (1 Jn. 5:16): for he, having taken upon himself to make effective for us the great remedy provided in the blood of Christ for the pardon of our sins, if *he* who is involved in the prosecution of that work is despised, blasphemed, and despitefully used, there neither is relief, nor can there be pardon, for sin. From where, then, can they arise or spring? As God has no other *Son* to offer another sacrifice for sin — so that he by whom his sacrifice is despised can have nothing remaining for him to do — no more has he *another Spirit* to make that sacrifice effective for us if the Holy Spirit in his work is despised and set aside. This, therefore, is a sensitive spot. We cannot employ too much holy diligence in our inquiries after what God has revealed in his Word concerning his Spirit and his work, seeing that there may be so fatal a mischief in opposition to him as the nature of man makes him so incapable of in any other instance.

And these considerations belong to the first head of reasons for the *importance, use, and necessity*, of the doctrine I propose to be inquired into. They are enough to show what is the concern of all believers in it; for, on account of these things, Scripture plainly declares, as we said before, that “he who hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9) If their portion is not in him, they will have no benefit by his mediation. Men may please themselves with a profession of being Christians, and owning the gospel, while they despise the Spirit of God in both his name and work. Their condition we shall examine and judge by Scripture before we come to the end of this discourse. And as for the Scripture itself, whoever reads the books of the New Testament, besides the great and precious

promises that are given concerning him in the Old, will find and conclude that, unless he is possessed by prejudice, the whole of what is declared in those writings turns on this one hinge: remove from them the consideration of the Spirit of God and his work, and it will be impossible to find out what they are aiming for.

Secondly, the great *deceit* and *abuse* that has been seen in all ages of the church, under the pretence of the *name and work of the Spirit*, makes a thorough consideration of what we are taught concerning them very necessary. Had not these things been excellent in themselves, and so acknowledged by all Christians, they would never have been falsely questioned by so many. Men do not seek to adorn themselves with rags, or boast of what, on its own account, is rightly subject to contempt. And according to the worth of these things, they are liable to abuse them; and the more excellent things become more vile and pernicious as they make a false pretence of them. Actually, the *false pretences* of some in all ages to the Spirit of God and his work, which is the *real excellence* of the gospel, have made those pretences abominable and unspeakably dangerous; for the better the things are which are counterfeited, the worse always are the ends they are employed for. In the whole world, there is nothing so vile as what *pretends to be God* and is not; nor is any other thing capable of so serious an abuse. Let me give you some examples, both from the Old Testament and the New.

The most significant gift of the Spirit of God for the use of the church under the Old Testament was that of *prophecy*. This, therefore, was deserved, in honour and reputation, as making a great impression of the authority of God on it, and in it, of his nearness to man. Besides, those in whom it had rightly the conduct of the minds and consciences of others given up to them, they spoke in the name of God, and had his warranty in what they proposed; which is the highest security of obedience. And these things caused many to pretend to have the gift who were, indeed, never inspired by the Holy Spirit; but were rather, on the contrary, activated by a spirit of lying and uncleanness: for it is very probable that, when men falsely, and in mere pretence, took upon themselves to be prophets divinely inspired, without revealing any previous diabolical “enthusiasm”, this was how the devil made use of them to further his own ends. Being given up, by the righteous judgement of God, to all kinds of delusions, pretending to possess his Spirit and holy inspiration, they were quickly taken up by a spirit of lying and unclean divination. So the false prophets of Ahab, who encouraged him to go up to Ramoth-gilead, foretelling his prosperous success (1 Kings 22:6), seemed only to have complied deceitfully with the inclinations of their master, and out-acted his other courtiers in *flattery* by gilding it with a pretence of prophecy. But when Micaiah came to lay open the mystery of their iniquity, it appeared that a lying spirit, with God’s permission, possessed their minds, and gave them impressions which, being supernatural, they were deceived as well as deceiving others (verses 19-23). This, they were rightly given up to, pretending falsely to act under the inspiration of that Holy Spirit whom they had not received. And so it is today with those whom we have seen visibly activated by an extraordinary power. Unduly pretending to supernatural agitations from God, they are really activated by the devil, a thing they neither desired nor looked for, but, being surprised by it, were pleased with it for a while, as was the case of some early Quakers.

Now, these false prophets of old were of **two** sorts, both mentioned in Deut. 18:2 —

Firstly, those that *professedly served other gods*, directing all their prophetic actions to the promotion of their worship. Such were the prophets of Baal, in whose name they prophesied, and whose assistance they invoked — “They called on the name of Baal, saying, O Baal, hear us!” (1 Kings 18:26-29) Many of these were slain by Elijah, and the whole race of them was later wiped out by Jehu. (2 Kings 10:18-28) This put an end to their claim to deity, for it is said that “he destroyed Baal out of Israel”, a false god having

no existence except in the deceived minds of their worshippers. It may be asked why they are called “prophets”? And so, in general, this was true of all the false prophets mentioned in Scripture. Was it because they merely pretended and counterfeited a spirit of prophecy, or had they really such a gift? I answer that it is undoubtedly true that they were of both sorts. These prophets of Baal worshipped the sun like the Tyrians. In this worship, they invented many hellish mysteries, ceremonies, and sacrifices, which they taught the people by whom they were hired. Being engaged in the service of the devil, he actually possessed their minds “as a spirit of divination”, enabling them to declare things unknown to other men. They, in the meantime, really finding themselves activated by a power *superior to them*, pretended to be possessed by the power of their god, and so became immediate worshippers of the *devil*. This, our apostle declares in 1 Cor. 10:20. Whatever those who left the true God aimed at in their worship, the devil interposed himself between that and them, as the object of their adoration. Hereby, he became the “god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4) — he whom, in all their idols, they worshipped and adored. Many of the false prophets acted with a spirit of divination from the devil, which they thought was the spirit of their god; for they found themselves under a superior power, which they could neither manage nor resist. Others of them were mere pretenders and counterfeiters, who deceived the foolish multitude with vain, false predictions. I will say more about this later.

Secondly, there were others who spoke in the *name*, and, as they falsely professed, by the *inspiration* of the Spirit of the holy God. With this sort of men, Jeremiah had to tussle; for in that apostatising age of the church, they had got such an interest and reputation among the rulers and people that they not only confronted his prophecies with contrary predictions (Jer. 28:1-4), but also called him a false prophet, and urged his punishment according to the law. (Jer. 29:25-27) And, with similar confidence, Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah carried it towards Micaiah, for he scornfully asked him, “Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?” (1 Kings 22:24) That is, “Whereas assuredly he speaks in me, how did he come to inspire you with a contrary revelation?” Ezekiel, a contemporary of Jeremiah, was exercised and perplexed with them (see chapters 13-14); for this sort of people — namely, false pretenders to divine extraordinary revelations — of old, usually flourished in times of danger and approaching desolation. The devil stirred them up to fill men with vain hopes, and kept them in sin and security, that destruction might seize them unawares. Even today, we have those who take the *same course* at a time of deserved, threatened, impending judgements, though they do not use the *same means*; yet they also do the work of the devil; for whatever encourages men to be secure in their sins is a false divination. (Jer. 5:30-31) And these sort of men were exposed by the prophet Jeremiah (see chap. 23:9-33), where anyone can read about their sin and judgement. And yet this false pretending to the spirit of prophecy was very far from casting any contempt on the real gift of the Holy Spirit in this; indeed, it gave it greater glory and lustre. God never more honoured his true prophets than when there were false ones about. Neither shall ever any false pretence to the Spirit of grace render him less dear to those who are partakers of him, or his gifts of less use to the church.

It was thus also under the New Testament at the first preaching of the gospel. Its doctrine at first was declared from *the immediate revelation* of the Spirit, preached with the assistance of the Spirit, made effective by his work and power, and was accompanied often with outward miraculous works and effects of the Spirit. That is why, in opposition to the law, it was called “the ministration of the Spirit.” (2 Cor. 3:8) These things being owned and acknowledged by all, those who had any false opinions of their own, or any other deceit to put upon Christians, could think of no better means for achieving their ends than by pretending to immediate revelations of the Spirit; for without some kind of credibility given them from these revelations, they knew that their own ideas would not in the least be taken seriously. Hence, the apostle Peter, having dealt with the revelation of God by his

Spirit in prophecy, under the Old Testament and the New (2 Pet. 1:19-21), adds, as an inference from that discourse, a comparison between the false prophets that were under the Old Testament and the false teachers that were under the New (2 Pet. 2:1) —

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you.”

And the reason for it is because that as they pretended to the Spirit of the Lord in their prophecies, saying, “Thus saith the LORD” when he did not send them, so these ascribed all their abominable heresies to the inspiration of the Spirit, by whom they were not assisted.

Hence comes that blessed warning and rule given us by the apostle John, who lived to see much mischief done in the church by this pretence (1 Jn. 4:1-3) —

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.”

A **twofold** direction the apostle gives here to all believers; the first by way of *caution*, that they should not believe every spirit — that is, not receive or give credit to every doctrine that was proposed to them as an immediate revelation under the inspiration of the Spirit. He intends the same as the apostle Paul (as in Eph. 4:14), who would not have us “carried about with every wind of doctrine” like vessels at sea, without anchors or helms, by the “sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”; for the crafts and deceits intended are such as men use when they cast a mist, as it were, before the eyes of others whom they intend to cheat and defraud. This is how false teachers dealt with their disciples by their pretence of immediate revelations. His next direction informs us how we may observe this caution to our advantage; and that is, by testing the spirits themselves, which is the duty of all believers on any such pretences. They are to test these spirits, and see whether they come from God or not. For the observation of this rule, and discharge of this duty, the church of Ephesus was commended by our Lord Jesus Christ in Rev. 2:2 — “Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars”; for those who said they were apostles pretended to have apostolic authority and infallibility on account of the immediate inspirations which they received by the Holy Spirit. In testing them, they tested the spirits that came to them. And by this warrant, may we try the spirit of the Church of Rome, which, in the same way, pretends to apostolic authority and infallibility.

Under these two directions, the apostle adds the *reason for* the present watchfulness required for the discharge of this duty — “Because,” says he, “many false prophets are gone out into the world.” It is “false teachers”, as Peter calls them, “bringing in damnable heresies” concerning whom he speaks. And he calls them “false prophets” partly in an allusion to the false prophets mentioned in the Old Testament, with whom they are ranked and compared by Peter, and partly because, as they fathered their prejudices on divine revelation, so these men falsely ascribed their doctrines to immediate divine inspiration. And, on this account also, he calls them “spirits” — “Try the spirits”; for as they pretended to come from the Spirit of God, so indeed, for the most part, they were activated by a spirit of error, lying, and delusion — that is, from the devil himself. Therefore, I in no way doubt that most of those who made use of this plea, and that they had their doctrines which they taught by immediate inspiration, which also effected other extraordinary operations or undiscoverable appearances of them as lying miracles by the power of that spirit by which

they acted, as we find in Mat. 24:24. Hence, the apostle does not direct us to test their pretensions to inspiration by putting them on other *extraordinary works* for their confirmation, for these also they made a show and appearance, and that in such a way that they would not be detected by most Christians. But he gives to all a blessed stable rule which will never fail them in this case who diligently attend to it; and that is, to test them by the *doctrine* that they teach. (1 Jn. 4:2-3) Let their doctrine be examined by the Scriptures, and if it is found to be sound, it can be received without danger by the hearers, whatever corrupt feelings the teachers may be influenced by. However, if it is not found to be sound, if it is not in harmony with the analogy of faith, whatever inspiration or revelation they plead in its justification, it must be rejected. This rule the apostle Paul confirms with the strongest words imaginable (Gal. 1:8) —

“Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

The apostle shows that, for our advantage in this testing we are to make of the spirits, it is good to have a clear conviction of, and a constant adherence to, some fundamental principles, especially those as we have reason to think will be the most cunningly attacked by seducers. Thus, because, in those days, the main design of Satan was, to cast about strange and false ideas about the Person and mediation of Christ, endeavouring to overthrow both the one and the other, the apostle advises believers to test the spirits by this one fundamental principle of truth, namely, that “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh”, which contains a confession both of his Person and his mediation. This, therefore, in the first place, believers were to demand of all new teachers and pretenders to spiritual revelations — “Do you confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh?” And if they were unwilling to make this confession, they never tolerated their other pretences, but turned away from them, not even bidding them “God speed”. (2 Jn. 1:7, 10-11) And I could easily show how many pernicious heresies were exposed in those days by this short confession of faith. For some of late (like Grotius, following Socinus and Schlichtingius) interpret this coming of Christ in the flesh as his outward lowly estate and condition, not in the pomp and glory of an earthly king, and thus openly corrupt the text. His coming in the flesh is the same as the “Word’s being made flesh” (Jn. 1:14); or “God being manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16) — that is, the Son of God being made “partaker of flesh and blood” (Heb. 2:14), or “taking on him the seed of Abraham” (verse 16) — that is, his being “made of a woman” (Gal. 4:4), or his being “made of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3), or his “being of the fathers as to the flesh”. (Rom. 9:5)

And this was directly opposed to those heresies which had then risen, whose proponents contended that Jesus Christ was just a fantasy, an appearance, a manifestation of divine love and power, denying that the Son of God was really incarnate, as the ancients generally testify. And well had it been for many in our days had they attended to such rules as this; but through a neglect of them, accompanied with an ungrounded boldness and curiosity, they have paid attention to other things by deceiving spirits, and have been engaged beyond recovery before they have considered that by their fraudulent deceits they have been cheated of all the principal articles of their faith; by which, if at *first* they had steadily tested and examined, they might have been preserved from their snares. The Jews say well that there was a double trial of prophets under the Old Testament — the one by their *doctrine*, the other by their *predictions*.

By their doctrine — namely, whether they seduced men from the worship of the true God into idolatry — all individual people in the church were involved. Direction for this is found in Deut. 13:1-3 —

“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee” (if it effects anyone by the seeming presence of an extraordinary power), and they say, “Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams.”

Let his signs and wonders be what they will, the people were to test them by what they taught. The judgement concerning predictions was left to the Sanhedrin, for which directions are found in Deut. 18:20-22; and, by virtue of this, they falsely and cruelly endeavoured to take away the life of Jeremiah because he foretold the ruin of them and their city. (Jer. 26:11) In the first place, though the false prophet's sign, wonder, or prediction came to pass, yet the doctrine he sought to confirm it was false, so he was to be rejected. In the latter, the fulfilling of his sign acquitted him because he taught with it nothing in point of doctrine that was false. The first kind of trial of the spirits of prophets is the duty of all believers under the gospel, and those who would deprive them of this liberty would make brutes of them instead of Christians — unless to believe a man does not know something, and obeys what he does not know why, these are the very properties of Christians! (See Rom. 12:2; Eph. 5:8-12; Phil. 1:10; 1 Thess. 5:21)

The other, so far as it was needed to preserve the church in truth and peace, was provided for in those early days, while there was a real communication of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit (and so more occasion to expose the false pretence of them, and more danger in being deceived by them), they received a peculiar gift of discerning them, which was bestowed on some among them (1 Cor. 12:10) — the “discerning of spirits” is reckoned among the gifts of the Spirit. Thus did the Lord graciously provide for his churches that some of them were enabled in an extraordinary manner to discern and judge those who pretended to extraordinary actions of the Spirit. And upon the ceasing of extraordinary gifts given from God, the gift also of discerning spirits ceased, and we are left with the *Word alone* for the trial of any that pretend to possess them. Now, this kind of pretence was so common in those days that the apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians to warn them that they themselves should not be deceived by their expectation and computation about the time of the coming of Christ, in the first place, warns them not to be moved “by spirit” (Thess. 2:2); that is, people pretending to spiritual revelations.

Something, also, of this nature has continued and broken out in succeeding ages, and that in instances abominable and dreadful! But the more eminent in any season are the *real outpourings* of the Holy Spirit upon the ministers of the gospel and disciples of Christ, the more diligence and watchfulness against these *delusions* are necessary; for on such occasions, when the use and reputation of spiritual gifts is prominent, Satan lays hold under the colour of them to intrude his own deceitful suggestions. In the dark days of the Papacy, all stories were full of satanic delusions, with fantastic apparitions, horrors, spectres, and such effects of darkness. It was seldom, or never, that any falsely pretended to the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; for these things were then of little use in the world. But when God was pleased to renew a fresh communication of spiritual gifts and graces to men, in the Reformation, the old dreads and terrors, nightly appearances, tending to deeds of darkness, vanished, and everywhere, by Satan's instigation, arose false pretenders to the Spirit of God; in which way of delusion he is still more active and industrious, as God increases the gifts and graces of his Spirit in his churches; though, as yet, in these latter ages, he has not repeated what he did in the primitive times of the gospel. A full and clear declaration from Scripture of the nature of the Holy Spirit and his operations may, through the blessing of God, be of use to fortify the minds of believers against satanic delusions which counterfeit his actions and inspirations. Directions to this purpose are given us by the holy apostle, who lived to see great havoc made in the churches by deluding spirits. Knowledge of the truth, testing of spirits that go around by

the doctrines of the Scriptures, dependence on the Holy Spirit for his teachings according to the Word are the things that he recommends to us.

Thirdly, there is in the days in which we live an *anti-spirit* set up and advanced against the Spirit of God as to his *Being*, in all his *operations*, and in his whole work and use towards the church of God; for this new spirit has taken upon itself whatever is promised to be done by the “good Spirit of God.” This is what some have called “the light within them”, though indeed it is nothing but a dark product of Satan from their own imaginations, or at best the natural light of conscience, which some of the heathen also call “a spirit”. But in this they trust as far as the results are concerned, leaving no room for the “promise of the Spirit of God”, nor anything for him to do. This false spirit teaches them, instructs them, and enlightens them; to this, they pay attention like the Samaritans did to Simon Magus, and, as they say, yielded obedience to it; and from its fruits, they expected acceptance with God, justification and blessedness hereafter. And one of these **two** things these deluded souls fix on — namely, that this light of which they speak is either the Holy Spirit of God or it is not. If they say it is the Spirit, it is easy to demonstrate how, by their so saying, they utterly destroy the very nature and being of the Holy Spirit, as will soon appear in our explanation. And if they say that it is not the Holy Spirit of God which they believe, it will be no less manifest that they utterly exclude him, on the other side, from his whole work, and substitute something else, Yes, it is an enemy, in the place of the true Spirit: for another God is a false god, another Christ is a false Christ, and another Spirit is a false spirit — the very spirit of antichrist. Now, because this is a growing evil amongst us, with many being led away and seduced, our duty to Jesus Christ, and compassion for the souls of men, requires that our utmost effort, in the ways of Christ’s appointment, should be used to stop this evil, which eats away like a cancer; which is also propagated by profane and vain babblings, increasing more and more to ungodliness.

Some, I confess, unduly rage against the persons of those who have imbibed these ideas, falling upon them with violence and fury as they do also on others — may the Lord not lay it to their charge! Yet this is ineffective, for we have the —

“...weapons of our warfare which are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down such like imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:4-5)

By these things, we ought to attempt the downfall of their errors, and the breaking of the snares of Satan by whom they are taken captive alive at his pleasure. Of course, the opposing of errors and false spirits by praying, preaching, and writing, is despised by them, in whose furious and haughty minds are *ure, seca, occide*, (“burn, slash, and kill”) which are alone of any significance — who think, “Arise, Peter, kill and eat” was a precept of more use and advantage to them than all the commands of Jesus Christ. But the way proposed to us by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, in which his holy apostles walked, and all the ancient, holy, learned writers of the church, is that which, in these matters, we must and shall pay attention to. And that course which is particularly well-suited to deal with the evil mentioned is to give a full, plain, evident declaration from Scripture of the nature and operations of the Holy Spirit of God. Hence, it will be undeniably shown what a stranger this pretended light is to the true Spirit of Christ; how far it is from being of any real use to the souls of men; yes, how it is set up in opposition to him and his work, by whom, and by whom alone, we become accepted by God, and are brought into an enjoyment of him.

Fourthly, there are, moreover, many hurtful and *poisonous opinions* concerning the Holy Spirit abroad in the world, and entertained by many, to the subversion of the faith which

they once professed. Such are those by whom his *deity* and *personality* are denied. About these, there have been many contests in the world: some endeavouring with diligence and subtlety to promote the perverse opinions mentioned; others “contending” according to their duty, “for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude verse 3) But these disputes are, for the most part, so managed that although the truth in some of them is strenuously defended, yet the minds of believers generally are little edified by them. For most are unacquainted with the ways and terms of arguing, which are suited to convince or stop the mouths of “gainsayers” (Tit. 1:9), rather than direct the faith of others. Besides, our knowledge of things is more by their operations and proper effects than from their own nature and formal reason. Especially it is so with divine things, and particularly with regard to God himself. In his own glorious Being, he dwells in light, to which no creature can approach. In the revelation he has made of himself by the effects of his will, in his Word and works, we are to seek after him. By them, are the otherwise invisible things of God made known, and his attributes declared; and we come to a better acquaintance with him than any we can attain by our most diligent speculations about his own nature. So is it with the Holy Spirit and his personality. He is, in Scripture, proposed to us to be known by his properties and works, adjuncts and operations, and by our duty towards him, and our offences against him. A due consideration of these things is what will lead us into that assured knowledge of his Being and subsistence which is necessary for the guidance of our faith and obedience; which, after all, is the purpose of all these inquiries. (Col. 2:2)

Wherefore, although I shall, on the way, explain, confirm, and vindicate the testimonies that are given in Scripture, or some of them anyway, as to his deity and personality, yet the principal means that I shall insist on for the establishing of our faith in him is the due and just exposition and declaration of the administrations and operations that are ascribed to him in the Scriptures; which also will shed great light into the whole mystery and economy of God in the work of our salvation through Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, the principal cause and occasion of our present undertaking is because of the open and horrible *opposition* that is being made to the Spirit of God and his work in the world. There is no concern of his that is not by many derided, opposed, and blasphemed. The very name of the Holy Spirit has become a reproach; nor do some think they can more spitefully expose any Christian to scorn than by ascribing to them a “concern for the Spirit of God”. This, indeed, is a thing that I have often wondered at, and continue still to do so: for whereas in the gospel, everything that is good, holy, and praiseworthy in any man, is expressly assigned to the Spirit as the immediate powerful cause and operator of it; and whereas the condition of men without him, and not made partakers of him, is described as “reprobate” or “rejected” by God, and foreign to any interest in Christ. Yet many who pretend to the belief and profession of the gospel are so far from owning or desiring a participation of this Spirit in their own persons, deriding and despising those who dare plead or avow a great interest in him or his works. Only, I must grant that, in this, they have had some examples who have gone before them — namely, the old scoffing heathen. We have an example in Lucian of Samosata, in his *Philopatris*, 18, who speaks in imitation of a Christian by way of scorn — “Speak out now, receiving power or ability of speaking from the Spirit”, or “by the Spirit.” Certainly, listening to the old warning, *Si non castè, tamen cautè* (“If you can't be good, be careful”) was needful for some in this matter. Could they not bring their own hearts to a due reverence of the Spirit of God, and an effort to participate in his fruits and effects. However, the things that are spoken about him and his work in the whole New Testament, and also in places almost innumerable in the Old, should put a check on their public contemptuous reproaches and scornful mocking, while they still own those writings to be of God — and this happened at his very first coming into the world when he was first pouring out on the disciples. (Acts 2:13)

Much pretence, I know, will be pleaded to give face to this abomination.

For, **firstly**, they will say, “It is not the *Spirit of God himself and his works, but the pretence of others concerning him and them*, which they reproach and scorn.” I fear this plea or excuse will prove too short and narrow to cover over their profaneness. It is dangerous venturing with rudeness and irritability upon holy things, and then thinking up excuses. But in reproaches of the Lord Christ and his Spirit, men will not lack in their pretences. (Jn. 10:32-33) And the things of the Spirit of God, which they reproach and scorn, are either things that are truly and really ascribed to him, and worked by him in the disciples of Jesus Christ, or they are not. If they are, indeed, no effects of the Spirit of grace, such as he was not promised for, nor attested to work in those who believe, such as vain enthusiasms, ecstatic raptures and revelations, certainly it is more becoming of Christians, those who profess, or at least pretend to have a reverence for God, his Spirit, and his Word, to show to, and convince, those with whom they are criticising of such things, that the results are not the “fruit of the Spirit” but ideas of their own, than to deride them under the name of the Spirit, or his gifts and operations. Do men ever consider with whom they are dealing with that they should not be so bold in these things? But if these things are the real effects of the Spirit of Christ in those who believe, or such as are undeniably assigned to him in Scripture (which they despise), what argument remains to give face to this daring profaneness?

Yes, but they will say, **secondly** —

“It is not the real *true operations* of the Spirit themselves, but the *false pretensions* of others about them, which they falsify and expose.”

But does this warrant the course that it is clear they steer in matter and manner? The same persons pretend to believe in Christ and the gospel, and to be made partakers of the benefits of his mediation; yet, if they do not have the Spirit of Christ, they have no saving interest in these things; for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom. 8:9) If this is so, then, in their false pretending to the Spirit of God and his works, which these people revile and scorn, why do they not deal with them in the same way they deal with Christ and the profession of the gospel? Why do they not say to true believers, “You believe in Christ, you believe in the gospel”, and then expose them to derision? So did the Jews deal with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ps. 22:7-8; Mat. 21:38-39) It is, therefore, the things themselves, and not the *pretences pretended*, that are the objects of this contempt and reproach. Besides, suppose that those whom at present on other occasions they hate or despise, who are not partakers of the Spirit of God, but are really strangers to the things which hypocritically they profess — will they grant and allow that any other Christians in the world really partake of him as to be led, guided, directed by him; to be quickened, sanctified, purified by Him; to be enabled to commune with God, and all duties of holy obedience by him, with those other effects and operations which Jesus Christ promised to his disciples? If they will grant these things to be really effected and accomplished by the Spirit, let them not be offended with those who desire that they should be so in themselves, and declare themselves to that purpose; and men would have more charity for them under their petulant scoffing than otherwise they are able to exercise.

It will, **thirdly**, yet be pleaded, “That they grant as fully as any the *being* of the Holy Spirit, the *promise* of him and his real *operations*. Only, they differ from others as to the sense and exposition of those phrases and expressions that are used concerning these things in the Scripture, which those others abuse in an unintelligible manner, making them proper which indeed are metaphorical.” But is this the way which they like and choose to express their ideas and apprehensions — namely, openly to revile and scorn the very naming, and

asserting, the work of the Spirit of God, in the words which He himself has taught? Such a boldness is this, which, as in former ages, have not given us a precedent, so we hope the future will not afford an instance of any to follow the example. For their sense and apprehension of these things, they shall afterward be examined so far as they have dared to expose them. In the meantime, we know that the Socinians acknowledge a Trinity, the sacrifice of Christ, the expiation of sin made thereby, and yet we have some differences with them about these things; and so we have with these men about the Spirit of God and his dispensation under the gospel, though, like them, they would grant the things spoken of them to be true, but are to be interpreted metaphorically. But of these things we deal with more fully later.

I say it has so come to pass, amongst many who profess they believe the gospel to be true, that the name or naming of the Spirit of God has become a reproach; and so also is his whole work. And the promise of Him made by Jesus Christ to his church is rendered useless and frustrated. It was the main, and, in this matter, the only, support which he left to it in his bodily absence, the only means of rendering the work of his mediation effective in them and among them; for without him all others, as the word, ministry, and ordinances of worship, become lifeless and useless. God is not glorified by them, nor the souls of men advantaged. But it is now uncertain with somewhat use he is to the church; yes, as far as I can make out, whether He is useful or not. Some have not trembled to say and contend that some things plainly ascribed to him in the Scripture, as words can make an assignation of anything, are the cause of all the troubles and confusions in the world! Let them have the word or tradition outwardly revealing the will of God, and what it is that he would have them do (as the Jews have both to this day); these being made use of by their own reason, and improved by their natural abilities, they make up the whole of man all that is required to render the persons or duties of any accepted with God! Of what use, then, is the Spirit of God in these things? None at all! It may be, nor the doctrine concerning him, “but only to fill the world with a buzz and noise, and to trouble the minds of men with unintelligible ideas.” Had not these things been spoken, they should not have been repeated; for death lies at the door for them. As it is, then, men may pray without Him, and preach without him, and turn to God without him, and perform all their duties without Him well enough; for if anyone shall plead the necessity of his assistance for the due performance of these things, and ascribe to him all that is good and well done in them, he shall hardly escape from being openly derided. Yet all this while we would be called Christians!

And what do such people think of the prayers of the ancient church and Christians to him for the working of all good in them, and their ascriptions of everything good to him? And where do we have any advantage over the Jews, or in what consists the pre-eminence of the gospel? They have the Word of God, that part of it which was committed to their church, and which of itself is sufficient to direct their faith and obedience; for so is the “sure word of prophecy” if diligently attended to. (2 Pet. 1:19) And if traditions are to be any use, they can outrival all the world. Neither does this sort of people lack their wits and the exercise of them. Those who converse with them in the things of this world are not used to say they are all fools. And for their diligence in the consideration of the letter of the Scripture, and inquiring into it according to the best of their understanding, none will question it but those to whom they and their concerns are unknown. And yet after all this, they are Jews still. If we have the New Testament just as they have the Old — they have only the letter of it to *philosophise on*, according to the best of our reasoning and understanding, without any dispensing of the Spirit of God accompanying it to shine a *saving* light into the mystery of it, and to make it effective to our souls — I shall not fear to say, but that as they call themselves “Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan” (Rev. 2:9), so we, who call ourselves Christians, as to all the saving ends of the gospel, are surely in a better condition.

Yet, it were to be wished that even here limits might be put on the *fierceness of some men's spirits*. But they will not suffer themselves to be so confined. In many places, they are transported with rage and fury, so as to stir up persecution against those who are really anointed with the Spirit of Christ, and that for no other reason but because they must do it. (Gal. 4:29) Other things, indeed, are pretended by them, but all the world can see that they are not of such importance as to give countenance to their wrath. This is the latent cause which stirs it up, and is often openly expressed.

At present, these things are thought only due to the mischief of *private persons*. When they are received in churches, they are the cause of, and an entrance into, a *fatal defection* and apostasy. From the foundation of the world, the principal revelation that God made of himself was in the oneness of his nature and his sovereignty over all. And it is in this that the Person of the Father was immediately represented by his power and authority; for he is the fountain and origin of the Deity, the other Persons, as to their subsistence, being of him: only, he also gave out promises concerning the peculiar exhibition of the Son in the flesh in the appointed season, as also of the Holy Spirit to be given by him in a special manner. Here, were their persons to be specially glorified in this world, it being the will of God that all "men should honour the Son as they honoured the Father" (Jn. 5:23), and the Holy Spirit in the same way. In this state of things, the only apostasy of the church was into polytheism and idolatry. Accordingly, that is how it came to pass. The church of Israel was continually open to these abominations, so that scarcely a generation passed, or very few of them, in which the body of the people more or less defiled themselves with them. To wean and recover them from this sin was the principal end of the preaching of those prophets which God, from time to time, sent to them. (2 Kings 17:13) And this also was the cause of all the calamities that befell them, and of all the judgements that God inflicted on them, as is seen in all the historical books of the Old Testament, and confirmed by examples innumerable. To put an end to it, God at length brought *total desolation* upon the whole church, and caused the people to be carried into captivity from their own land. And it turned out that, on their return, whatever other sins they fell into, they did keep themselves from idols and idolatry. (Ezek. 16:41-43, 23:27, 48)

And the reason for this was because the time was now drawing near in which they were to be tested with another dispensation of God — the Son of God was to be sent to them in the flesh. To receive and obey him was now to be the principal instance and trial of their faith and obedience. They were no longer to be tested merely by their faith, whether they would own only the God of Israel, in opposition to all false gods and idols, for that ground God had now absolutely won in them; but now, all is to turn on this hinge, whether they would receive the Son of God coming in the flesh, according to the promise. Here, in general, that church and people fell by their unbelief, apostatised from God, and became in this way neither a church nor a people. (Jn. 8:24) They being rejected, the Son of God called and gathered another church, founding it on his own Person, with faith and the profession of it such a truth. (Mat. 16:18-19) In this new church, therefore, this foundation was fixed, and this ground made good, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be owned and honoured as we honour the Father. (1 Cor. 3:11; Jn. 5:23) And here, all that are properly called Christians agree, as the church of Israel did in one God after their return from the captivity of Babylon. But now the Lord Jesus Christ, being ascended to his Father, has committed his whole affairs in the church and in the world to the Holy Spirit. (Jn. 16:7-11) And it is in this design of God that the Person of the Spirit may be singularly exalted in the church; to whom they were so much in the dark before that some (not the worst of them) professed they had not so much as heard whether were any Holy Spirit or not (Acts 19:2) — that is, at least, as to the peculiar dispensing of him then introduced into the church.

Wherefore, the duty of the church now immediately respects the Spirit of God, who acts towards it in the name of the Father and of the Son; and with regard to him it is that the church in its present state is capable of an apostasy from God. And whatever is found of this nature amongst any, it is here that it has its beginning; for the sin of despising *his* Person and rejecting *his* work now is of the same nature as *idolatry* of old, and the *Jews' rejection of the Person of the Son*. And whereas there was relief provided against these sins, there was a new dispensation of the grace of God to follow in the evangelical work of the Holy Spirit. If men sin against him and his operations, containing the perfection and complement of God's revelation of himself to them, their condition is deplorable. It may be some will say and plead that, whatever is spoken of the Holy Spirit, his graces, gifts, and operations, entirely belong to the first times of the gospel, in which they were manifested by *visible and wonderful effects* — to those times they were confined; and, consequently, we have no other interest or concern in them but as a *recorded testimony* given of old to the truth of the gospel. This is so, indeed, as to his extraordinary and miraculous operations, but to limit his whole work there is plainly to deny the truth of the promises of Christ and to overthrow his church; for we shall make it undeniably evident that none can believe in Jesus Christ, or yield obedience to him, or worship God in him, but by the Holy Spirit. And, therefore, if the whole dispensing of him and his communication to the souls of men cease, so does all faith in Christ and Christianity also.

On these and other similar considerations it is that I have thought it *necessary* for myself, and for the church of God, that Scripture should be diligently searched concerning this great matter. For none can deny that the glory of God, the honour of the gospel, the faith and obedience of the church, with the everlasting welfare of our own souls, are deeply concerned here.

The apostle Peter, dealing with the great things of the gospel, taught to himself and the rest of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, tells those to whom he was writing that in what was preached to them were not “cunningly-devised fables” (2 Pet. 1:16); for so were the “power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” then reported to be in the world. What was preached was looked on as “cunningly devised” and artificially-framed “fables” to take in and allure the people. This, the apostle gives his testimony against, and appeals to the divine assurance which they had of the holy truths delivered to them (verses 17-21). In the same way, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, having preached the doctrine of regeneration to Nicodemus, calls it into question as a thing credible and intelligible (Jn. 3:4); for whose instruction, and the rebuke of his ignorance, he let him know that he spoke nothing but what he brought with him from heaven — from the eternal Fountain of goodness and truth (verses 11-13).

The doctrine concerning the Spirit of God, and his work in the souls of men, has, therefore, been preached in the world. What he does in convincing men of sin, what in working godly sorrow and humiliation in them, what in the exceeding greatness of his power which he puts forth in the regeneration and sanctification of the souls of men, what are the supplies of grace which he bestows on those who believe, what assistance he gives to them as the Spirit of grace and supplications — has been preached, taught, and impressed on the minds of those that attend to the dispensing of the word of the gospel. Answerable to this, men have been urged to test, search, examine themselves, as to what of this work of the Holy Spirit they have discovered, observed, or experienced, and which has been effectively accomplished in or on their own souls. And in this, they have been taught that the great concerns of their peace, comfort, and assurance, of their communion among themselves as the saints of God, with many other ends of their holy living, depend. No, it is, and has been, constantly taught them that, if there is not an effective work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, they “cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Now, these things,

and whatever is spoken in the exposition of them, are by some called into question, if not utterly rejected.

Yes, some look on them as “cunningly-devised fables” — things that some *not long ago* invented, and others propagated to their advantage. Others say that what is delivered concerning them is hardly, if at all, to be *understood* by rational men, being only empty speculations about things in which the Christian faith is little, or not at all, concerned. Whereas, many, very many, have received these things as sacred truths, and are persuaded that they have found them realised in their own souls, so that into their experience of the work of the Holy Spirit of God in them and on them, according as it is declared in the Word, all their consolation and peace with God is, for the most part, resolved as that which gives them the best evidence of their interest in him who is their peace. And whereas, for the present, they believe that unless these things are so in and with them, they have no foundation to build a hope of eternal life on — it cannot but be of indispensable necessity for them to examine and search the Scripture diligently whether these things are so or not. For if there is no such work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men, and that indispensably necessary for their salvation, if there are no such assistances and supplies of grace needful for every good duty, following what they have been instructed in — then, in the whole course of their profession, they have only been seduced by “cunningly-devised fables”, their deceived hearts have fed on ashes, and they are yet in their sins.

It is, then, of no less consideration and importance than the eternal welfare of their souls, immediately concerned in what they diligently test, examine, and search into these things, by the safe and infallible touchstone and rule of the Word, on which they may, must, and ought, to venture their eternal condition. I know, indeed, that most believers are so far satisfied in the truth of these things and their own experience of them, that they will not be moved in the least by the opposition which is put up towards them, and the scorn that is cast on them; for “he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.” (1 Jn. 5:10) Yet, Luke wrote his Gospel to Theophilus “that he might know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed” (Lk. 1:4) — that is, to confirm him in the truth, by an addition of *new degrees of assurance* for him — and so it is our duty to be take note of the clamorous opposition that is made to the truths which we profess, so much so that we are as much concerned as our souls are worth, so as to compare them diligently with the Scriptures, that we may be the more fully confirmed and established in them. And, upon the examination of the whole matter, I shall leave them to their option, as Elijah did of old — “If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal be God, follow him.” (1 Kings 18:21) If the things most Christians believe and acknowledge concerning the Spirit of God and his work in their hearts, his gifts and graces in the church, with the manner of their communication, act according to the substance of them (things in which they all *generally agree*) according to Scripture, taught and revealed there, on the same terms as they received them, then let them abide in the *holy profession of them*, and rejoice in the consolations they have received by them. But if these things, with those others which, in the application of them to the souls of men, are directly and necessarily deduced, and are yet to be deduced from them, are all but vain and useless ideas, it is high time the minds of men got rid of them.

CHAPTER 2

THE NAME AND TITLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The name of the Holy Spirit — Various uses of the words PNEUMA (Greek) and RUACH (Hebrew), for the wind, or anything invisible with a sensible agitation (Amos 4:13) — Mistakes of the ancients rectified by Eusebius Jerome, metaphorically a picture of vanity, metonymically a name closely associated with the part or quarter of anything; for our vital breath, the rational soul, the feelings, angels good and bad — Ambiguity from the use of the word, and how to be removed — Rules concerning the Holy Spirit — The name “Spirit”, how special and appropriate to him — Why he is called the “Holy Spirit” — From which he is called the “Good Spirit”, the “Spirit of God”, the “Spirit of the Son” — Acts 2:33 and 1 Pet. 1:10-11 explained — 1 Jn. 4:3 defended.

BEFORE I go on to consider the *things themselves*, concerning which we must deal, it will be necessary to say something about the *name* by which the third Person of the Trinity is commonly known and is uniquely called in Scripture. This is the “Spirit”, or the “Holy Spirit”, as we usually call him. And this I will do so that you may not be confused with the titles, nor be at a loss concerning the meaning of those passages of Scripture where they are used for other purposes: for it is so that the name of the second Person, the *Logos*, “the Word”, and of the third title *Pneuma* (the Spirit), are often applied to point to other things. I mean that these words are difficult to translate, and some take advantage of the ambiguous use of them. But the Scripture is well able to make its own intention and meaning clear to us humble and diligent inquirers.

It is, then, acknowledged that the use of the words *ruach* and *pneuma* in the Old Testament and the New is somewhat varied; yet they are words which can only apply to the Holy Spirit of God. Their particular meaning in different passages is to be collected and determined from the subject-matter being dealt with there, taking into account other special circumstances where they are used. This was first attempted by the most learned Didymus of Alexandria, whose words I have written down, and put his observations together in a more logical way, with some additions that are needed to further clear up the whole matter.

Firstly, in general, *ruach* and *pneuma* mean a *wind* or *spirit* — that is, anything that moves and is not moved — “And God made a *ruach* (“wind” or “spirit)”, that is, a strong and mighty wind, “to pass over the earth” for the drying up and removal of the waters. (Gen. 8:1) We find *pneuma* in John 3:8 — “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth”; which is a proper description of this first meaning of the word. It is an agitation of the air which is unseen. See Ps. 1:4. And, in this sense, it sometimes means a “great and strong wind” (1 Kings 19:11), and sometimes a cool and soft wind, or a light easy agitation of the air such as often arises in the evenings of the spring or summer. See Gen. 3:8 — “God walked in the garden in the cool of the day”, that is, when the evening air began to breathe gently, and moderated the heat of the day. So we find these words of the poet Virgil —

Solis ad occasum, quum frigidus aëra vesper Temperat (Geor. iii. 336)

“At the going down of the sun, when the cold evening tempers the heat of the air.”

And some think this to be the meaning of that passage in Ps. 104:4 — “Who maketh his angels spirits” — “swift, agile, powerful as mighty winds.” But the reader should consult my Exposition of Heb. 1:7.

This is one meaning of the word *ruach*, or this is one thing meant by it in Scripture. So, among many other passages, we find this in Amos 4:13 — “For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the spirit”, that is, “the wind.” The LXX. (Greek translation) renders this passage — “Who establisheth the thunder, and createth the spirit”, though some copies read “the mountains.” And the next words in the text — “And declareth unto man what is his thought” they render — “And declareth unto men his Christ” or his Anointed (Messiah). But it is certain that, from the ambiguity of the word “spirit” in this passage, with the corrupt translations making mention of Christ in the next words, some, who of old, denied the deity of the Holy Spirit, strongly insisted on it to prove him a creature; a comment passed on in Didymus, Aurelius Ambrose, Eusebius Jerome, Hilary of Poitiers, and the ancients generally. But the context determines the meaning of the word beyond all exception. It is the power of God in making and disposing of things here below, whether dreadful for their *greatness* and height, as the *mountains*, or mighty and *effective* in their operations, as the *wind*, or *secret* in their conceptions, as the *thoughts of men*, or stable in their continuance, as the *night* and *day*, the evening and morning, without the least regard to Christ or the Spirit, that it is dealing with.

And I cannot but observe from here the great necessity there is of searching the *original text* in the interpretation of the Scriptures, as it might be proved by a thousand other examples. But one we may take from two great and learned men, who were contemporaries in the Latin Church, in their thoughts on this passage.

One is Ambrose, who, interpreting these words in his second book, *De Spiritu Sancto, lib. 2 cap. 6*, and being deceived by the corrupt translation mentioned, “Annunciants in homines Christum suum”, was forced to give a very strained exposition of what, in truth, is not in the text; and to relieve himself also with another corruption in the same place, where “forming the mountains” is rendered by “establishing the thunder”; and yet, when he had done all, he could scarcely free himself of the objection about the creation of the Spirit, which he deigns to answer.

His words are —

“Siquis propheticum dictum, ideo derivandum putet ad interpretationem Spiritus Sancti; quia habet, ‘annunciants in homines Christum suum,’ is ad incarnationis Dominicae mysteria dictum facilius derivabit. Nam si te movet quia Spiritum dixit, et hoc non putas derivandum ad mysterium assumptionis humanae; proseguere scripturas et invenies optime congruere de Christo, de quo bene convenit aestimari, quia firmavit tonitrua adventu suo; vim videlicet et sonum coelestium scripturarum; quarum velut quodam tonitru mentes nostrae redduntur attonitae, ut timere discamus, et reverentiam coelestibus deferamus oraculis. Denique, in Evangelio fratres Domini filii tonitru dicebantur. Et cum vox Patris facta esset dicentis ad Filium, ‘Et honorificavi te, et iterum honorificabo’, Judaei dicebant, ‘Tonitruum factum est illi.’”

And with some observations to the same purpose, he adds —

“Ergo tonitrua ad sermones Domini retulit, quorum in omnem terram exivit sonus; Spiritum autem hoc loco animam, quam suscepit rationabilem et perfectam intelligimus.”

The substance of his discourse is that, in dealing with Christ (who indeed is neither mentioned nor intended in the text), he speaks of “confirming the thunder” (which nowhere appears here), by which he means the sound of the Scriptures, and the preaching of the

Word; the spirit that was created being the human soul of Jesus Christ. Nor was he alone in this interpretation. Didym. *lib. 2 de Spiritu Sancto*, Athanas. *ad Serapion*, Basil. *lib. 4. contra Eunom.*, amongst the Grecians, are in like manner entangled with this corruption of the text; as was also *Concil. Sardicen. in Socrat. lib. 2 cap. 20.*

The other person is Jerome, who, consulting the original, as he was well able to do, first translated the words —

“Quia ecce formans montes, et creans ventum, et annuncians homini eloquium suum.”

Here, he declares the mistake of the LXX., and the occasion of it —

“Pro montibus qui Hebraicè dicuntur HARIM (hills) soli LXX. BRONTĒS (thunders), id est, tontitruum, verterunt. Cur autem illi Spiritum et nos dixerimus ventum, qui Hebraice RUACH vocatur, causa manifesta est: quodque sequitur, ‘Annuncians homini eloquium suum,’ LXX. transtulerunt, ‘Preaching to men his Christ’, verbi similitudine, et ambiguitate decepti.”

So he goes on to show that it is a misreading in the text of two words.

And as SHIACH (utterance), from where the word comes, signifies both to meditate and to speak, so the word itself intends a *conceived thought*, to be spoken later.

And SHIACH here is reciprocal, not relative. For this reason comes his exposition —

“Qui confirmat montes, ad cujus vocem coelorum cardines et terrae fundamenta quatuntur. Ipse qui creat spiritum, quem in hoc loco non Spiritum Sanctum, ut haeretici suspicantur, sed venture intelligimus, sive spiritum hominis, annuncians homini eloquium ejus, qui cogitationum secreta cognoscit.” (Jerome)

Secondly, because the *wind*, on account of its unpredictable variation, inconstancy, and change, is esteemed *vain*, and not to be observed or trusted — thus the wise man tells us that “he that observeth the wind shall not sow” (Eccl. 11:4) — the word is used metaphorically to represent *vanity* (Eccl. 5:16) — “What profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?” So also Micah 2:11 — “If a man walk with the *wind* and *falsehood*” — that is, in *vanity*, pretending to a spirit of prophecy; and *falsehood*, vainly, foolishly, falsely boasting. So in Job 15:2 — “Should a wise man utter knowledge of wind?” (Job 16:3) So also Jer. 5:13 — “And the prophets shall become wind”, or be vain, foolish, uncertain, and false, in their predictions. But *pneuma* is not used in this way metaphorically in the New Testament.

Thirdly, by a metonymy [a figure of speech, where something is called by something else associated with it]; it means any *part* or *quarter* that might describe the world from where the *wind blows*, as also a part of anything divided into *four sides* or *quarters*. So Jer. 52:23 — “There were ninety and six pomegranates towards a wind”, that is, on the one side of the chapter that was above the pillars in the temple. And in Ezek. 5:12 — “I will scatter a third part into all the winds”, or all parts of the earth. Hence, the “four quarters” of a thing lying at the four parts of the world are called its four winds (1 Chron. 9:24), from which come the “the four winds” in the New Testament in Mat. 24:31. This illustrates the use of the word in general with regard to things *natural* and *inanimate*; and every passage where it is used gives us this particular meaning.

Fourthly, again, these words are used for anything that cannot be seen or touched, be it in *itself material* and *corporeal*, or absolutely *spiritual* and *immaterial*. Thus the *vital breath* which we and other living creatures breathe is called “the breath of the spirit of life” (Gen 7:22) — that vital breath by which our lives are maintained by respiration. So Ps. 135:17; Job 19:17; which point to a thing material or corporeal. But, most frequently, it denotes things purely spiritual and immaterial, as in finite substances it signifies the rational soul of man — “Into thine hand I commit my spirit.” (Ps. 31:5) They are the very words with which our Saviour committed his departing soul into the hands of his Father. (Lk. 23:46) So also Ps. 146:4 — “His breath,” we say, “goeth forth; he returneth to his earth.” It is his soul and its departure from the body that is meant. This is that “spirit of the sons of man that goeth upward”, when the “spirit of a beast goeth downward to the earth”, or turns to corruption. (Eccl. 3:21: see also 8:8, 12:7)

Hence —

Fifthly, it is taken for the *feelings* of the mind or soul of man, whether they are good or evil — “The spirit of Jacob revived” (Gen. 45:27); he began to take heart and be of good courage. — “The prophets that walk after their own spirit” (Ezek. 13:3) — that is, after their own desires and inclinations, when, indeed, they had no vision, but spoke what they wanted to say. In Num. 14:24, Caleb is said to have “another spirit” than the murmuring people — that is, another mind, will, purpose, or resolution. It is used for prudence (Josh. 5:1), anger, or the irritable faculty (Eccl. 7:9), and fury. (Zech. 6:8) “He shall cut off the spirit of princes” (Ps. 76:12); that is, their pride, insolence, and contempt of others. *Pneuma* in the New Testament frequently refers to the intellectual part of the mind or soul, and how it is active or involved in action (Lk. 1:47; Rom. 1:9); and is often used for the mind in all its inclinations, in its whole habitual bent and design. (1 Thess. 5:23)

Sixthly, *angels* are also called spirits — that is, the good angels (Ps. 104:4); and it may be an angel was intended in 1 Kings 18:12; and evil angels or devils in 1 Kings 22:21-22. That spirit who appeared before the Lord, and offered himself as a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab’s prophets was none other but the one who appeared before God in Job 1:6, and is called “Satan”. These, in the New Testament, are called “unclean spirits” (Mat. 10:1); and the observation of the ancients that Satan is not called a spirit exclusively, except with an addition or mark of distinction, which holds only for the New Testament. And because evil spirits are likely to torment the minds and bodies of men, then evil thoughts, disorders of mind, wicked purposes, disquieting and vexing the soul, arising from, or much furthered by melancholy depression, are called, sometimes, “an evil spirit.” The case of Saul I shall look at later.

With such variety, these words are used and applied in Scripture because of some very *general notions* in which the things intended agree. For the most part, there is no great difficulty in discovering their special meaning, or what it is they signify in the several passages they occur. Their design and circumstances, as to the subject-matter dealt with, determine their meaning.

And despite the ambiguous use of these words in the Old and New Testaments, there are **two** things clear and evident to our purpose —

Firstly, there is in the Holy Scriptures a full, distinct revelation or declaration of the Spirit, or the Spirit of God, as someone *unique*, and in every way distinct from anything else that is occasionally or constantly signified or meant by the word “Spirit” And not only this, many particular passages bear testimony, and also the whole course of Scripture supposes, as that, without an acknowledgment, where nothing else contained in it can be understood, or

is of any use at all, we shall find this doctrine to be the very life and soul that quickens the whole from first to last. Take away the work and power of the Holy Spirit from its administration, and it will prove but a dead letter, of no saving worth to the souls of men; and take away the doctrine concerning him from the Scripture, and the whole will become unintelligible and useless.

Secondly, whatever is affirmed concerning this Holy Spirit — the Spirit of God — it all relates either to his *Person* or his *operations*, and these operations of his are various; sometimes, by a metonymy, he is called “spirit”, more of which we will consider later. I do not, therefore, need to prove that there is a Holy Spirit distinct from all other spirits, and from everything else that, on several occasions, who is meant by that name; for this is acknowledged by all who study the Scriptures; yes, it is so for Jews and Mohammedans, as well as all sorts of Christians. And, indeed, all those false views of him, which have, to this day, any account given to them, may be referred to **two** heads —

1. That of the *modern Jews*, who, in their Talmud, affirm the Holy Spirit to be the *influential power of God*; which fancy is entertained and diligently promoted by the Socinians.

2. That of the *Mohammedans*, who make him a *prominent angel*, and sometimes call him Gabriel; which, being imported from the Macedonians of old, has found even some defenders and promoters in our days.

This, then, being his *name*, concerning whom we are dealing with, some things concerning the name and the *use* of it, as especially applied to him, must be premised. For sometimes, he is called the “Spirit” absolutely, sometimes the “Holy Spirit”, sometimes the “Spirit of God”, or the “good Spirit of God”, or the “Spirit of truth” and “holiness”, and sometimes the “Spirit of Christ” or “of the Son.” The first, used absolutely, points to his Person; the rest express his characteristics and relationship with the other Persons.

In the name *Spirit*, **two** things must be included —

First of all, his *nature* or *essence* — namely, that he has a *pure, spiritual, or immaterial substance*; for neither the Hebrews nor the Greeks could express such a Being in his subsistence except by *ruach* and *pneuma* (a Spirit). Nor is this name given to the Holy Spirit without referring to the wind, with its subtlety, agility, and power; for these things have respect only to his operations, in which, from its general appearance, his works and effects are compared with the wind and its effects. (Jn. 3:8) But it is his substance or being which is first intended by this name. Thus it is said of God in Jn. 4:24 — “God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”; that is, he possesses a pure, spiritual, immaterial nature, not limited to any one place, and not favouring one over another in his worship, as the passage proves. It will therefore be said that, on this account, the name “Spirit” is not peculiar to the third Person of the Trinity, seeing it contains a description of that nature which is the same in all three Persons of the Trinity; for whereas it is said “God is Spirit”, it is not spoken of this or that Person, but of the very nature of God in the whole. I agree; and therefore the name “Spirit” is not, in the first place, characteristic of the third Person in the Trinity, but refers to that nature of which each Person is a partaker.

But, moreover, as it is particularly and constantly ascribed to him, it says something about his special manner and order of existence; so that, wherever there is mention of the “Holy Spirit”, his relation to the Father and the Son is included, for he is the Spirit of God. And here there is an allusion to something connected with the creation — not, as I said, to the wind in general, to whose agility and invisibility he is compared in his operations, but to the breath of man; for as the vital breath of a man comes from a continual emanation from

him, and yet is never separated utterly from his Person, or forsakes him, so does the Spirit of the Father and the Son proceed from them by a continual divine emanation, yet still abiding as One together. All those allusions are weak and imperfect, in which substantial things are compared with accidental, and infinite things with finite, and those that are eternal with those that are temporary.

Hence, their conformity is infinitely more than their agreement; yet such allusions bring instruction in this way due to our weakness. Thus he is called in Ps. 33:6 — “The Spirit” or “the breath of the mouth of the LORD”, or “of his nostrils” (Job 27:3); and, in Ps. 18:15, there is an eminent allusion to the breath of a man. Concerning the way this proceeding and emanation of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, as far as it is revealed, and as we are capable of understanding it, I have dealt with elsewhere. (*A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, 1669) Here, concerning the subsistence of the Holy Spirit as an eternal emanation from the Father and Son, and, as it were, the breath of God, in which our Saviour signified the communication of his gifts to his disciples by breathing on them. (Jn. 20:22) In man’s first creation, it was said of Adam that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” (Gen. 2:7) He says the same thing with regard to God. (Ps. 18:15) That is why he is called the “Spirit”. And because, as I said earlier, the word *pneuma* is variously used, Didymus (*de Spiritu Sancto*, lib. 3), supposes that the prefixing of the Greek article *to* (the) makes the meaning clear, and limits it to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Often, no doubt, it does so, but not always, as is found in Jn. 3:8, where *to* is joined to *pneuma*, and yet only refers to “the wind.” But the subject I am dealing with, and what I affirm concerning him, will sufficiently determine the meaning of the word where he is called absolutely “THE SPIRIT”.

Again, he is called most eminently the *Holy Spirit*. This is his normal title in the New Testament, and it is derived from the Old. See Ps. 51:11 — “The Spirit of thy Holiness”, or “Thy Holy Spirit”; Is. 63:10-11 — “The Spirit of his Holiness”, or “his Holy Spirit.” Hence are “The Holy Spirit” and “The Spirit of Holiness” commonly used by the Jews. In the New Testament, he is “that Holy Spirit”, so we must inquire into the special reasons for this title. Some suppose it is only from his special work of sanctifying us, or making us holy, for this effect of sanctification is his particular work, and that of what sort it is, whether it consists in a separation from things profane and common to holy use and service, or whether it is a real infusion and operation of holiness in men, which comes from him in a special manner. This also shows him to be God, for it is God alone who sanctifies his people — “I am Jehovah which sanctifies you.” (Lev. 20:8) And God, in that work, ascribes to himself the title of “Holy” in a special way, and, as such, would have us consider him — “I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy.” (Lev. 21:8) This may be one reason for the *frequent use* of this property with reference to the Spirit. But this is not the whole reason for this name and title: for where he is earlier mentioned, he is called “The Spirit of God’s Holiness” (Ps. 51:11; Is. 63:10-11); and in the New Testament absolutely “The Spirit of Holiness” (Rom. 1:4). And this was with regard to his *nature*, in the first place, and not merely his operations. As God, then, absolutely, is called “Holy”, “the Holy One”, and “the Holy One of Israel”, he is being there described by that glorious property of his nature in which he is “glorious in holiness” (Ex. 15:11), and by which he is distinguished from all false gods — “Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Ex. 15:11) Thus is the Spirit called “Holy” to denote the holiness of his nature. And, on this account, comes the conflict between him and the unholy or unclean spirit in Mk. 3:29-30 —

“He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness: because they said, ‘He hath an unclean spirit.’”

And here, in the first place, his *personality* is asserted; for the unclean spirit is a person, and if the Spirit of God were only a quality or accident, as some fancy and dream, there could no opposite comparison be made between him and this unclean spirit — that is, the devil. So also they are opposed with respect to their *natures*. His nature is holy, whereas that of the unclean spirit is evil and perverse. This is the foundation of his being called “Holy”, even the eternal glorious holiness of his nature. And, on this account, he is so styled also with regard to all his operations; for it is not only with reference to his particular work of regeneration and sanctification, or of making us holy, but to all his works and operations that he is called holy: for he, being the immediate operator of all divine works outwardly from God, and they, being in themselves, are all holy, whatever kind they are, he is called the “Holy Spirit.” Yes, he is called this to attest to and witness that all his works, all the works of God, are holy, though they may be great and terrible; and other works that come from corrupt reason make another appearance. In all this, we must agree that the “Holy One in the midst of us will do no iniquity.” (Hos. 11:9; Zeph. 3:5) The Spirit of God is frequently, and almost constantly, called “Holy” to attest that all the works of God, in which he is the immediate operator, are holy: for it is the work of the Spirit to harden and blind obstinate sinners, as well as to sanctify the elect; and his actions in the one is no less holy than in the other, although holiness is not the effect of it in its purpose. So, when he came to declare his dreadful work in the final hardening and rejection of the Jews — one of the most tremendous effects of divine Providence, a work which, for all the strangeness of it, men “would in no wise believe though it were declared unto them” (Acts 13:41) — he was signally proclaimed Holy by the seraphim that attended God’s throne. (Is. 6:3, 9-12; Jn. 12:40; Acts 28:25-26)

There are, indeed, some actions in men, and in the world, that are allowed by God’s permission, and in his righteous judgement, by evil spirits, whose persons and actions are placed in opposition to the Spirit of God. See 1 Sam. 16:14-15 —

“The Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul’s servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee.”

See also verse 23 — “The evil spirit from God was upon Saul.”

See also 1 Sam. 18:10, 19:9. This spirit is called “an evil spirit of God” (1 Sam. 16:15), and is absolutely “a spirit of God” (verse 23), where we have supplied the word “evil” in our translation. But these expressions are regulated and explained in verse 14, where he is called “an evil spirit from the LORD”; that is, appointed and commissioned by him for the punishing and terrifying of Saul. For as the Spirit of the Lord departed from him by withdrawing his assistance and influential operations by which he had produced in him those gifts and abilities of mind which suited him for the discharge of his kingly office, on the first impression, where he was “turned into another man” from what he was in his private condition (1 Sam. 10:6-9), so the evil spirit came upon him to excite him out of his own well-deserved depression, discontent, fear, and a sense of guilt, as also to press terrifying thoughts and apprehensions on to his imagination; for so it was said, “an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him” (1 Sam. 16:14), that is frightened him with a dreadful agitation of his mind.

We may touch a little on this subject as an aside. The root of Saul’s trouble and distress lay in himself: for as I grant that he was sometimes under an immediate agitation of body and mind from the powerful impressions of the devil upon him — for under them, it is said he “prophesied in the midst of the house” (1 Sam 18:10), which argues for an extraordinary and involuntary effect on him, yet mainly he was governed by the excitation and provocation of his personal disturbances, both moral and natural; for these have, in

themselves, a great power in crucifying the minds of guilty men. So Tacitus observed in his writing, *Plato, Annal. lib. 6:6* —

“Neque frustra praestantissimus sapientiae firmare solitus est, si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, posse aspici laniatus et ictus; quando, ut corpora verberibus, ita saevitia, libidine, malis consultis, animus dilaceretur.”

(The most eminent wise man was not wont in vain to affirm, that if the minds of tyrants were laid open and discovered, it would be seen how they were cruciated and punished; seeing that as the body is rent and torn by stripes, so is the mind by cruelty, lusts, evil counsels and undertakings.)

So Socrates, as I find in Plato’s *Republic. lib. 9.*, where he disputes various things to that purpose. And another Roman historian gives us a significant example with Jugurtha [king of Numidia], after he felt the full guilt of his many horrible wicked deeds.

And yet this work, in itself, is of the same kind in which God sometimes employs holy angels, because it is the execution of his righteous judgements. So it was a “watcher and a holy one” that, in such a case, smote Nebuchadnezzar with a sudden madness and frenzy. (Dan. 4:18-17)

To return to the subject: as he is called *Holy*, so he is the *Good Spirit of God* — “Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness” (Ps. 143:10), or rather, “Thy good Spirit shall lead me”, or, as *Junius* — “Lead me by *thy good Spirit*.” The *Chaldee* here adds — “*The good Spirit of thy holiness*” or “*Thy holy good Spirit*.” Didymus, *lib. 2 de Spir. Sanc.*, says that some copies here read *to hagian* (the Holy One), a remembrance of the extra-biblical writing in *Paul and Thecla*, and not anywhere else. So Neh. 9:20 — “Thou gavest them thy good Spirit to instruct them.” And he is called so mainly because of his nature, which is essentially good, as “there is none good but one, that is, God” (Mat. 19:17); as also from his operations, which are all as good as they are holy; and, to believers, they are full of goodness in their effects. Jonah Crellius, *Prolegom.*, p. 7, distinguishes between this good Spirit and the Holy Spirit; for this good Spirit he would limit to the Old Testament, making it the author or cause of those gifts of wisdom, courage, prudence, and government, granted to many people of old. So it was said of Bezaleel, that he was “filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and understanding, and in knowledge” (Ex. 31:3); so also in Ex. 35:31 — “That is”, says he, “with this ‘good Spirit of God.’” So also, it is pretended that in all those passages where the Spirit of God is said to “come upon” men, to enable them to do some great and extraordinary work, (as Judg. 3:10). But this plainly contradicts the apostle, who tells us that there are, indeed, various operations, but one Spirit; and that the one and self-same Spirit works all these things as he pleases. (1 Cor. 12:6, 11)

And if, from every different or distinct effect of the Spirit of God, we must multiply spirits, and assign every one of them to a distinct spirit, no one will know what to make of the Spirit of God in the end. Probably, we should have so many feigned spirits as to lose the only true one. As for this particular instance, David prays that God would “lead him by his good Spirit.” (Ps. 143:10) Now, certainly, this was none other but that Holy Spirit whom he prays in another place that the Lord would not take away from him — “Take not thy Holy Spirit from me” (Psalm 51:11), which is confessed to be the Holy Spirit. This he also mentions in 2 Sam. 23:2 — “The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” And what Spirit was this that Peter declares in 2 Pet. 1:21 — “Holy men of God spake in old time as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”? So vain is this pretence!

Again, he is commonly called the *Spirit of God*, and the *Spirit of the Lord*; thus we find the first mention of him in Gen. 1:2 — “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” And I do not doubt that the name “*Elohim*” (God), which includes a plurality of the same nature, is used in the creation, and the whole description of it, to intimate the distinction of the divine Persons. For soon, the name *Jehovah* is also included (in Gen. 2:4), with *Elohim* joined with it (the LORD GOD). But that name is not used in the account given us of the work of creation, because it has respect only to the unity of the essence of God. Now, the Spirit is called the “Spirit of God” originally and mainly, as the Son is called the “Son of God”, for the name of “God” in those descriptions is taken personally for the Father — that is, God the Father, the Father of Christ, and our Father. (Jn. 20:17) And he is so termed *hupostatikōs* [hypostatic], on account of the order and nature of personal subsistence and distinction within the holy Trinity. The Person of the Father is the “foundation and origin of the Trinity”, and the Son is from him by eternal generation, and is, therefore, his Son, the Son of God. The name as the Father comes originally from this, the eternal generation of the Son. So is the Person of the Holy Spirit from him by eternal procession or emanation. Hence is that relation of his to God the Father, whereby he is called the “Spirit of God”.

And he is not only called the “Spirit of God” but “the Spirit that is of God” who proceeds from him as a distinct Person. This, therefore, arising from, and consisting in, his proceeding from him, he is called, metaphorically, “The breath of his mouth” as proceeding from him by an eternal breathing out. On this foundation and supposition he is also called, secondly, “The Spirit of God”, to differentiate him from all other spirits; as, thirdly, also, because he is promised, given, and sent by God for the accomplishment of his whole will and pleasure towards us. The instances of this will be later considered. But these his names have their foundation in his *eternal relationship* with the Father, as I said before.

On the same account, originally, he is also called the *Spirit of the Son* —

“God hath sent forth the Spirit of the Son into your hearts.” (Gal. 4:6)

Also the *Spirit of Christ* — “What time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify.” (1 Pet. 1:11) See also Rom. 8:9 —

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom 8:9)

Therefore, the Spirit, of God and the Spirit of Christ are one and the same; for that hypothetical proposition, “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” is an inference taken from the foregoing words, “If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” And this Spirit of Christ (verse 11) is said to be the “Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead.” Look, then, in what sense he is said to be the Spirit of God — that is, of the Father — in the same way he is said to be the Spirit of the Son. And this is *because he proceeds* from the Son also; and for no other reason can he be so called, at least not without the original and formal reason for that title.

Secondarily, I confess he is called the “Spirit of Christ” *because he was promised by him*, and was sent by him, to make effective and accomplish his work towards the church. But this he could not do unless he had previously been the Spirit of the Son by his proceeding from him also: for the order of the dispensing of the divine Persons towards us arises from the order of their own subsistence in the same divine essence; and if the Spirit proceeded only from the Person of the Father, he could not be promised, sent, or given by the Son.

Consider, then, the human nature of Christ in itself and abstractedly, for the Spirit cannot be said to be the Spirit of Christ; for he was anointed and endowed with gifts and graces by him, as we will show. And if from this, he may be said to be the Spirit of Christ without regard to his proceeding from him as the Son of God, then he may also be said to be the Spirit of every believer who has received the unction, and who is anointed with his gifts and graces. For although believers are also, as to measure and degree, just beneath what Christ was, who did not receive the Spirit by measure; yet, as he is the head and they the members of the same mystical body, their unction by the Spirit is of the same kind. But now, the Spirit of God may not be said to be the Spirit of this or that man who has received his gifts and graces. David prays, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me" — not "*my* Holy Spirit." And he is distinguished from our spirits even as they are sanctified by him. (Rom. 8:16) — "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit." No more, then, can he be said to be the Spirit of Christ merely on account of his communication with him, though, in a degree above all others, inconceivably excellent; for, with respect to this, he is still called the Spirit of God (or the Father), who sent him, and anointed the human nature of Christ with him.

It may be said, perhaps, that he is called the "Spirit of Christ" because he was promised, given, and poured out by him. So Peter says in Acts 2:33 —

"Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

But in this regard, namely, as given by Christ the mediator, he is expressly called the Spirit of the Father; and he was given as the promise of the Father: for so he is introduced — "It shall come to pass in the last days", saith God, 'I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh.'" And so our Saviour tells his disciples that he would —

"...pray the Father, and he should give them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth." (Jn. 14:16-17)

Nor is he other the Spirit of Christ, originally and formally, but as he is the Spirit of God — that is, as Christ is God also. On this supposition, I grant, as before, that he may consequently be called the "Spirit of Christ" because he was promised and sent by him, because he is doing his work, and communicating his grace, image, and likeness to the elect. And this is made plain in 1 Pet. 1:10-11 —

"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify."

And this Spirit is said absolutely to be the "Holy Spirit". (2 Peter 1:21) So, then, the Spirit who was in the prophets of old, in all ages since the world began, before the incarnation of the Son of God, is called the "Spirit of Christ" — that is, of him who is so. Now, this could not be because he was *anointed by that Spirit*, or because he gave it afterward to his disciples, for his human nature did not exist at the time of their prophesying. Those, indeed, who receive him after the unction of the human nature of Christ may be said, in some sense, to receive the Spirit of Christ because they are made partakers of the same Spirit with him, to the same ends and purposes, according to their measure; but this cannot be so with respect to those who lived and prophesied by him, and died long before his incarnation. Wherefore, it is pleaded by those who oppose both the deity of Christ and the Spirit, to which are undeniably here attested, that the Spirit, which they cannot deny, that the Holy Spirit is intended, and is called the "Spirit of Christ" because the prophets of

old, who spoke by him, principally prophesied concerning Christ and his grace, and delivered great mysteries concerning them. So Christ is made in this place the object of the Spirit's teaching, and not the author of his sending! Jonah Crellius agrees, (*Prolegom.*, pp. 13-14). But why, then, is he not called the "Spirit of God" also for this reason, because the prophets that spoke by him spoke wholly of God the things and the will of God? This our critics will not say, for they acknowledge him to be the "virtue and power of God, inherent in him and proceeding from him." But, then, whereas God, even the Father, is a Person, and Christ is a Person, and the Spirit is said to be the "Spirit of God" and the "Spirit of Christ". Thus it appears that the same expression to our critics must have different interpretations, and that the Spirit is called the "Spirit of God" because he is so, *and proceeds from him*, but the "Spirit of Christ" because he *is not so, but only deals with him*?

The answer from the critics comes readily — namely, "Because the Father is God, but Christ is not, and therefore could not give the Spirit when he was not." This is an easy answer — namely, it denies a fundamental truth, and sets up their denial in opposition to a clear testimony given to it. But the truth is, this pretended sense leaves no sense at all in the wording: for if the Spirit who was in the prophets is called the "Spirit of Christ" only because he declared beforehand the things of Christ — that is, his "sufferings and the glory that did follow" (1 Pet. 1:11) — and that is the sole reason for that description; then the sense or importance of the words is this according to the critics: "Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit — which signified when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ — which, to them, signified when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ"; for according to this interpretation, the Spirit of Christ is nothing but the Spirit as testifying beforehand of him. And, for that reason alone is he so called. The absurdity of this is apparent to all!

But they, with a bold face, attempt this wresting of Scripture from 1 Jn. 4:3 —

"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

And some of our critics say, "The spirit of antichrist is said to be in the world, when antichrist has not yet come." But the spirit here is not called the spirit of antichrist because it declared and foretold the things of antichrist before his coming; on which account alone they allow the Spirit of God in the prophets of old to be called the "Spirit of Christ". They have, therefore, no argument from this passage, which fails them in the main thing they wish to prove from it. Again, supposing these words, "...whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world" should be interpreted of the spirit mentioned, and not of antichrist himself, yet no more is meant but the false teachers and seducers which were then in the world, acting with the same spirit as antichrist will at his coming; and so there is no conformity between these expressions.

Besides, the spirit of antichrist was then in the world, as was antichrist himself. So far as his spirit was then in the world, so far he was here also; for antichrist and his spirit cannot be separated. Both he and it were then in the world in their forerunners, who opposed the truth of the gospel of the incarnation of the Son of God and his sufferings. And, indeed, the spirit of antichrist in this passage is no more than his *doctrine* — antichristian doctrine — which must be tested and rejected. Neither is any special person intended by "antichrist", but a *mysterious opposition* to Christ and the gospel, signally headed by a *series* of men in the latter days. He, therefore, and his spirit, began to be together in the world in the apostles' days, when the "mystery of iniquity" began to "work". (2 Thess. 2:7) There are, then, no grounds for taking these words to pervert and wrest that other expression

concerning the Spirit of Christ in the prophets of old. This, then, is the formal reason for this title. The Holy Spirit is called the “Spirit of the Son” and the “Spirit of Christ” on account of his procession or emanation from his Person also. Without this, he could not be called properly the “Spirit of Christ”, but on that supposition he may be. He is so-called from that various relationship that he has to him in his work and operations. Thus is the Spirit called in Scripture, and these are the *names* by which the essence and *subsistence* of the third Person in the Holy Trinity are declared.

How he is called this, on account of his *offices* and *operations*, will become clear as we proceed.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIVINE NATURE AND PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PROVED AND DEFENDED

The purpose of our consideration of the dispensing of the Spirit — Principles premised on it — The nature of God as the foundation of all religion — Divine revelation gives the rule and measure of religious worship — God has revealed himself as Three-in-One — Distinct actions and operations ascribed to this distinct Person; therefore the Holy Spirit a divine distinct Person — Double opposition to the Holy Spirit — By some, his personality granted, and his deity denied — His personality denied by the Socinians — Proved against them — The open vanity of their pretences — Mat. 28:19 pleaded — Appearance of the Spirit in the shape of a dove explained and improved — His appearance as fire opened — His personal subsistence proved — Personal properties assigned to him — Understanding the Spirit — Argument from this pleaded and defended — His will — Jn. 3:8 and Jas. 3:4 cleared — Exceptions removed — The Power of the Spirit — Other personal ascriptions to him, with testimonies to them defended and explained.

I NOW go on to the *matter* itself, which is under consideration — namely, the *dispensing of the Spirit of God* to the church; and I shall try to anchor what I have to offer on to its proper principles, and, from them, develop the whole doctrine concerning it. And this must be done so as to indicate the interest of our faith, obedience, and holy worship, in the whole and every part of it; for these are the immediate ends of all divine revelations according to that holy maxim of our blessed Saviour — “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” (Jn. 13:17) So, to this end, the following principles must be observed —

Firstly, *the nature and being of God is the foundation of all true faith, and holy religious worship in the world.* The great end for which we were made, and for which we were brought forth by the power of God in this world, is to worship him, and give glory to him; for he “made all things for himself”, and for his own glory (Prov. 16:4), to be rendered to him according to the abilities and capacities that he has furnished us with. (Rev. 4:11) And what makes this worship indispensably necessary for us, and from whence it is *holy* or *religious*, depends on the nature and being of God himself. There are, indeed, many parts or acts of religious worship which immediately respect (as to their reasons and motives) what God is to us, or what he has done, and continues to do, for us; but the main and adequate reason for all divine worship, and what makes it as it is, is what God is in himself.

Because he *is* — that is, as an infinitely glorious, good, wise, holy, powerful, righteous, self-subsisting, self-sufficient, all-sufficient Being, the fountain, cause, and author of life and being to all things, and of all that is good of whatever kind. He is the first cause, the last end, and the absolute sovereign Lord of all, the rest and all-satisfactory reward of all other beings. Therefore, he is to be adored by us, and worshipped with divine and religious worship. Hence, we are, in our hearts, minds, and souls, to admire, adore, and love him; his praises we are to celebrate; him we must trust and fear, and so resign ourselves and all our concerns to his will and disposal; and so regard him with all the acts of our minds and persons, answerable to the holy properties and excellence of his nature. Thus it is to glorify him as God; for seeing “of him, and through him, and to him are all things” (Rom. 11:36), to him must be “glory for ever.” Believing that God is like this, and

that he “is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6), this is the ground of all our coming to God in worship. And here lies the sin of men; for the “invisible things of God being manifest unto them, even his eternal power and Godhead”, yet “they glorify him not as God.” (Rom 1:19-21) True worship means to honour, worship, and fear God for himself; that is, on account of what he is in himself. Where the divine nature is, there is found the true, proper, formal object of religious worship; and where it is not, it is idolatry to ascribe it to, or exercise it towards, anything else. And this God instructs us in all those passages where he proclaims his name, and describes his eternal *excellence*, absolutely, or in comparison with other things. All is for that end, that we may know him to be such a One who should be worshipped and glorified for himself, for his own sake.

Secondly, *the revelation that God is pleased to make of himself to us gives the rule and measure of all religious worship and obedience.* His Being, absolutely considered, taking in all his infinite, divine perfections, is the formal reason for our worship. But this worship is to be directed, guided, and regulated by the revelation he makes concerning his being and excellence to us. This is the purpose of divine revelation — namely, to direct us in paying that homage which is due to the divine nature. I am speaking now, not only of *positive institutions*, which are the free effects of the will of God, depending originally and solely on revelation, and which, therefore, have been varied and actually changed; but this is what I am getting at —

“Look, whatever way God reveals his being and attributes to us by his works or his Word, our worship consists in a proper application of our souls to him according to that disclosure of himself.”

Thirdly, *God has revealed or shown himself as the Three-in-one* (the Trinity), and, therefore, as such is to be worshipped and glorified by us — that is, as three distinct Persons subsisting in the same infinitely holy, One, undivided in essence. This principle (and has it not been questioned?) must be confirmed here at large; it being what the whole following discourse presupposes and supports. And, in truth, I fear that the failing of some men’s profession of faith began when they gave up this foundation. It is now evident to all, that here there has been a fatal mistake of the part of those poor deluded souls among us, called Quakers; and it is altogether in vain to argue with them about other particulars while they are carried away with infidelity from this foundation. Convince any of them of the doctrine of the Trinity, and all the rest of their ideas vanish into smoke. And I wish it were so with them only. There are others, and they are not a few, who either reject this Trinitarian doctrine as false, or despise it as unintelligible, or neglect it as useless, or see it as of no great importance. I know this ulcer lies hidden in the minds of many, and we cannot but expect that it will break out, and cover the whole body with its defilements while they remain church members. But these things are left in the care of Jesus Christ.

The reason why I do not here insist on the confirmation and vindication of this fundamental truth is because I have done it elsewhere [*A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, 1669, an Essay of more than 17,700 words], and have more than once publicly cast my mite into this sanctuary of the Lord; for which, and other services, I stand indebted to the gospel; and I have already met with that reward which I am always expecting. For the present, I can only say that, on this supposition, God has revealed himself as the Three-in-One, and all our worship of him should be considered in this light. Therefore, in our initiation into the profession and practice of the worship of God according to the gospel, are we not already initiated into it since our baptism? — “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (Mat. 28:19) This is the foundation of all our obedience to the things Christ has commanded us to do (see verse 20). To this service, we are solemnly dedicated, namely, to God as

Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as they are each of them equal participants in the same divine nature.

Fourthly, *these Persons are so distinct in their particular subsistence, that distinct actions and operations are ascribed to each of them.* And these actions are of **two** sorts —

1. *Ad intra*, which means those internal acts in one Person of which another person is the object. These actions are natural and necessary, inseparable from the being and existence of God. The Father knows the Son, and loves him, and the Son sees, knows, and loves the Father. In these mutual actions, one Person is the object of the knowledge and love of the other (Jn. 3:35) — “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand” (Jn. 5:20); “The Father loveth the Son” (Mat. 11:27); “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son” (Jn. 6:46); “None hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.” This mutual knowledge and love of Father and Son is expressed largely in Prov. 8:22-31, which passage I have opened and explained elsewhere. All of them are absolute, infinite, natural, and necessary to the being and blessedness of God. Actually, the Spirit *is* the mutual love of the Father and the Son, knowing them as he is known, and “searching the deep things of God.” (1 Cor. 2:10) And in these mutual, internal, eternal actions in themselves consists much of the infinite blessedness of the holy God.

Coupled with that —

2. *Ad extra*, where there are distinct actions by the three Persons which are voluntary, or effects of will and choice, and are not natural or necessary. And they are of **two** sorts —

(1) Those that respect *one another*; for there are external acts of one Person towards another: but then the Person who is the object of these actions is not considered absolutely as a divine Person except with regard to some particular dispensation and condescension. So the Father gives, sends, commands the Son, as he condescended to take our nature upon him, and be the mediator between God and man. Then the Father and the Son sent the Spirit, as he condescended in a special way to take on the office of being the sanctifier and comforter of the church. Now, these are free and voluntary acts, depending on the sovereign will, counsel, and pleasure of God, and might not have been without the least diminution of his eternal blessedness.

(2) *Ad extra*, meaning that there are special acts towards his creatures. This, the whole Scripture testifies to, so that it is altogether needless to confirm it by quoting particular examples. There are none who have learned the first principles of the doctrine of Christ but can tell you what works are ascribed particularly to the Father, what to the Son, and what to the Holy Spirit. Besides, this will be disclosed later with regard to all the distinct actions of the Spirit; which is sufficient for our purpose.

Fifthly, hence, it follows unavoidably *that this Spirit with whom we deal is, in himself, a distinct, living, powerful, intelligent, divine Person*; for none other could be the author of those internal and external divine acts and operations which are ascribed to him. But here I must stay a little, and confirm that foundation on which we are building; for we are investigating those things which that one and self-same Spirit distributes according to his own will. And it is indispensably necessary for our present purpose that we inquire who and what that one and self-same Spirit is, seeing in him and his will the One on whom all these things depend. And we know also, that if men keep up their opposition to his Person, it would be to no great purpose to concern ourselves in his operations; for the foundation of the fabric being stripped away, the superstructure will be of no use, nor will it last.

The opposition in the world to the Spirit of God doctrinally can be reduced to **two** heads. For some there are who grant his *personality*, or that he is a *distinct self-subsisting Person*, but they deny his *deity*, denying him to be a participant in the divine nature; nor will they allow him to be called God.

Objection

“A created finite spirit he is, but the chiefest of all spirits that were created, and the head of all the good angels. Such a spirit there is, and he is called the “Spirit of God” or the “Holy Spirit” due to the work in which he is employed.”

This thought comes from the Macedonian heretics of old, and they are now followed by the Mohammedans; and some, lately, among ourselves, have attempted to revive the same frenzy. But we need not trouble ourselves with this idea. The folly of it is so evident that it is almost utterly deserted by all; for such things are affirmed of the Holy Spirit in Scripture against those who assert his *personality* but deny his *deity*, which is the greatest madness that anyone can fall into in spiritual things. Wherefore, the Socinians, the present great enemies of the doctrine of the holy Trinity, and who can be thought of as going seriously about the work of destroying the church of God, utterly reject this plea as a pretence. But what they advance in its place is of no less harmful nature and consequence; for, granting the things assigned to him to be the effects of *divine power*, they deny his *personality*, and assert that what is meant by the name of the “Spirit of God” or the “Holy Spirit” is nothing more than a *quality* in the divine nature, or the power that God sends out for certain purposes; which yet is no new invention of theirs. I don’t want here to argue with them about all the concerns that come from this difference; for there is nothing of importance in all their pretences or exceptions, but it will, in one place or another, come up again as we proceed in our progress. I shall only, at present, confirm the divine personality of the Holy Spirit with one argument, which I will not say is such that no one can return some answer to — for what is it that the serpentine wits of men will not pretend an answer to, or an exception against, if their lusts and prejudices require them to do so? But I will boldly say it is such that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it in the hearts of true believers, the strengthening of whose faith is all that I am aiming to do. And if this does not to all unprejudiced people produce the truth and reality of the divine personality of the Holy Spirit, it must certainly convince all men that nothing that is taught or delivered in Scripture can possibly be understood.

One consideration, which I have partly proposed before, I shall put forward to free the *subject* of our argument from ambiguity; and this is, that this word or name “Spirit” is used sometimes to denote the Spirit of God *himself*, and sometimes his gifts and graces, which are the *effects* of his operations in the souls of men. And this, our opponents in this cause are forced to confess, and there, in all their writings, is distinguished the Holy Spirit and his effects. This being supposed, I say it is impossible to prove the Father a Person, or the Son to be so (both of which we acknowledge), any other way than that we may and do prove the Holy Spirit to be so also —

“For he to whom all personal properties, attributes, adjuncts, acts, and operations, are ascribed, and to whom they belong, and to whom nothing is, or can be, truly and properly ascribed but what may and does belong to a person, is a person, and him we are taught to believe that this is so.”

So we know the Father to be a Person, as also the Son; for our knowledge of things is more by their properties and operations than by their essence. Especially is this so with

respect to the nature, being, and existence of God, which are, in themselves, absolutely incomprehensible. Now, I shall not confirm this argument with reference to the Holy Spirit from this or that particular testimony, nor from the assigning of any single personal property to him, but from the constant, uniform tenor of Scripture in ascribing all these properties to him. And, we may add here, that things are so ordered in the wisdom of God that there is no personal attribute that is found in an infinite divine nature but is, in one passage or other, ascribed to him.

There is no objection from our critics that can withstand the force of this argument, but only that some things, on the one hand, are ascribed to the Spirit which do not belong to a person, nor can be spoken of him who is; and, on the other, various things that properly belong to persons are, in Scripture, figuratively ascribed to such things as are quite different. Thus, as to the first head of this exception, the Holy Spirit is said to be “poured out”, to be “shed abroad”, or to be “an unction”, and such like; all of which expressions we will deal with later. What then? Shall we say that he is *not a Person*, but only *the power of God*? Will this make those expressions concerning him right? How can the virtue of God, or the power of God, be said to be poured out, to be shed abroad, and so on? Wherefore, both our critics and we acknowledge that these expressions are figurative, as many things are concerning God in Scripture, and that frequently. And what is their meaning under their figurative colours we shall afterwards discover.

This, then, does not in the least quash the argument unless this assertion were generally true, that whatever is spoken of figuratively in the Scripture does not relate to a person; which would leave no one in heaven or on earth! On the other side, it is confessed that there are things peculiar to rational subsistence or Persons which are ascribed sometimes to those that are not so. Many things of this nature, such as to “hope”, to “believe”, to “bear”, are ascribed to charity. (See 1 Cor. 13:7) But everyone presently understands that this expression is figurative, the abstract being made concrete by a *metalepsis* [the link between two things], where charity is said to do what a man endued with that grace would do. Also, Scripture is said to “see”, to “foresee”, to “speak”, and to “judge”, all of which must be the actions of a Person. But who does not see and grant that a metonymy [figure of speech] is and must be allowed in such a case, being ascribed to the *effect*. Really, Scripture which is properly the *cause*, has the Spirit of God speaking in it. The heavens and the earth are said to “hear”, and the fields, with the trees of the forest, to “sing” and “clap their hands” by a *prosopopoeia* [another figure of speech]. Now, concerning these things, there is no danger of making a mistake. The light of reason and their own nature give us a sufficient understanding of them, and such figurative expressions as are used concerning them are common in all good authors.

Besides, Scripture itself, in other places innumerable, teaches and declares what they are, as that its plain and direct proper assertions sufficiently expound its own figurative pronouncements: for these and similar ascriptions are only occasional; the direct description of the things themselves is given to us in other passages. But now, with respect to the Spirit of God, all things are otherwise. The constant uniform expressions concerning him are the ones that declare him to be a Person, endowed with all personal properties, no description being found anywhere which is inconsistent with their proper application to him.

If a serious, wise, and honest man should come and tell you that in such and such a country, where he has been visiting, there is one who is the governor there, who discharges his office well — that he hears causes, discerns rightly, distributes justice, relieves the poor, comforts those that are in distress. Supposing you gave him that credit which honesty, wisdom, and sobriety deserve, would you not believe that he is referring to a righteous, wise, diligent, intelligent *person*, discharging the office of a governor? What

else could any living man imagine? But now, suppose that another unknown person, or, as far as he is known, is justly suspected of deceit and forgery. Should he come to you and tell you that all that the other informed you, and acquainted you with, was indeed true, but that the words which he spoke had quite another meaning; for it was not a man or any person that he intended, but the sun or the wind that he meant by all that he spoke of him: for whereas the sun by its benign influences makes a country fruitful and temperate, well suited to the relief and comfort of all that dwell there, and disposes the minds of the inhabitants to mutual kindness and goodness, he was describing these things figuratively to you, under the notion of a righteous governor, together with his actions, although he never gave you the least intimation of any such intention — must you not now believe that either the first person, whom you know to be a wise, sober, and honest man, was a notorious trifler, who plotted your downfall if you were to order any of your thoughts according to his reports, or that your latter informer, whom you have just cause to suspect of falsehood and deceit in other things, endeavoured to abuse both him and you, make his truthfulness suspect, and spoil all your thoughts based on what you heard? One of these you must certainly decide on. And it is not otherwise in our case.

Scripture informs us that the Holy Spirit rules in and over the church of God, appointing its overseers under him; that he discerns and judges all things; that he comforts those that are faint, strengthens those that are weak, is grieved with them, and is provoked by them, when they sin; and that in all these, and in other things of a similar nature innumerable, he works, orders, and disposes everything “according to the counsel of his own will.” (Eph. 1:11) In this, it directs us so as to order our lives towards God, that we may not grieve him nor displease him, telling us what great things he will do for us; on which we lay the stress on our obedience and salvation. Can anyone possibly, who gives credit to the testimony thus proposed in Scripture, conceive of anything otherwise of this Spirit but as of a holy, wise, intelligent Person?

Now, while we are proceed under the flow of these thoughts, there come to us some men, Socinians or Quakers, whom we have just cause on many other accounts to suspect, at least, of deceit and falsehood; and they confidently tell us that what the Scriptures say concerning the Holy Spirit is indeed true, but that in and by all the expressions which it uses concerning him, it intends no such person as it seems to do, but is “an accident, a quality, an effect, or influence, of the power of God”, which, figuratively, it does of all the things mentioned — namely, that he has a will figuratively, and an understanding figuratively, and discerns and judges figuratively, and is sinned against figuratively, and so on, concerning all that is said of him. Can anyone who is not bereft of all natural reason, as well as spiritual light, choose now to determine that either Scripture was designed to draw him into errors and mistakes about the principal concerns of his soul, and so ruin him eternally, or that these people, who would impose such a meaning on it, are indeed corrupt seducers, seeking to overthrow his faith and comfort? As such, they will appear at last to be.

I now go on to confirm the argument proposed —

1. All things necessary for this purpose are found in the solemn form of our *initiation* into a covenant with God (Mat. 28:19), where our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his apostles to “disciple all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” This is the foundation we lay for all our obedience and profession, which is to be regulated by this initial command. Now, no one will, or does, deny that the Father and the Son are distinct Persons. Some, indeed there are who deny the Son to be God; but none are so mad as to deny him to be a Person, though they would have him only to be a man — all grant him, whether God and man, or only a man, to be a person distinct from

the Father. Now, what confusion must this need introduce, to add to them, and to join equally with them, as to all the concerns of our faith and obedience, if the Holy Spirit is not a divine Person even as they exists! If, as some fancy, he is a person indeed, but not one that is divine, but a creature, then here in Scripture, is openly the same honour assigned to him who is no more than God himself. This, elsewhere, Scripture declares to be idolatry, and is to be detested. (Gal. 4:8; Rom. 1:25) And if he is not a person, but a virtue and quality in God, and an emanation of power from him, concerning which our adversaries speak things ominous and unintelligible, what sense can anyone find in the words?

Besides, whatever is ascribed to the other Persons, either with regard to themselves, or our duty towards them, is *equally ascribed* to the Holy Spirit; for whatever is intended by the “name” of the Father and of the Son, he is equally concerned with it there. It is not the name “Father” and the name “Son” but the name of “God” that is directed to them both, and intentionally. It is a name common to them all, and is distinctly applied to them all; but they have not, in this sense, distinct or different names. And, by the “name” of God, either his being or his authority is meant; for other intention it has none that our critics have been able to invent. Take the “name” here in either sense, and it is sufficient for what I intend: for, if it is used in the first way, then the being of the Spirit must be acknowledged to be the same as that of the Father; if in the latter, he has the same divine authority with him. He who has the nature and authority of God is God — he is a divine Person.

Our argument, then, from here onwards is not merely from his being joined with the Father and the Son, for so it is, as to some ends and purposes. Any creature may be joined with them (this our critics prove from Acts 20:32; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 3:10; 2 Thess. 1:9), and might do it from other passages innumerable, although the first of these will not confirm what it is produced to give authority to — our greatest critic is Jonas Schlichting (*de Trinitat. ad Meisner*, p. 605). But it is from the manner and end of his being conjoined with the Father and the Son, where their “name” — that is, their divine nature and authority — is ascribed to him, that we must argue against. Again, we are said to be baptised “into his name”. And no sense can be made of these words but what unavoidably includes his personality; for two things they may and do intend, nor anything else but what may be drawn from them: — in the first place, our religious owning of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in all our divine worship, faith, and obedience. Now, as we own and avow the one, so we do the other; for we are alike baptised into their name, equally submitting to their authority, and equally taking the profession of their name upon us. If, then, we avow and own the Father as a distinct Person, we must do so also to the Holy Spirit.

Again, by being baptised into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we are sacredly initiated and consecrated, or dedicated, to the service and worship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This we take upon ourselves in our baptism. Here lies the foundation of all our faith and profession, with that engagement of ourselves to God which constitutes our Christian faith. This is the pledge of our entrance into a covenant with God, and of our giving up of ourselves to him in the solemn bond of the faith. Here, to conceive that anyone who is not God as the Father, who is not a Person as he is also, and the Son likewise, is joined with them *for the ends* and *in the manner* mentioned, without the least note of difference as to deity or personality, a differentiation which gives a strange belief, destructive of all religion, and leading the minds of men towards polytheism. And as we lend ourselves to all holy obedience to the Father and Son, to believe in them, trust, fear, honour, and serve them, so we must do the same with regard to the Holy Spirit; which is what we do. How our critics can’t see this, no one can understand.

We do not, then, in this case, from now on, merely plead our being baptised into the “Holy Spirit” as some pretend; nor, indeed, are we said so to be. Men may figuratively be said to

be baptised *into a doctrine*, when their baptism is a pledge and token of their profession of it. So the disciples, whom the apostle Paul met at Ephesus (Acts 19:3), are said to be baptised “into the baptism of John” — that is, the doctrine of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, of which his baptism was a pledge. So also the Israelites are said to be baptised “into Moses” (1 Cor. 10:2), because he led and conducted them through the sea, when they were sprinkled with the waves as a token of their initiation into the rites and ceremonies which he was to deliver to them. But we are said to be baptised into his “name”, which is the same as that of the Father and the Son. And certainly this proposal of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the object of all our faith and worship, and our engagement thus required as the foundation of all our present faith and future hopes made to us, and that under one and the same name. If the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons, subsisting in the same undivided essence, is not taught and declared in these words, we may justly despair of ever having any divine mystery revealed to us.

2. His appearance in and under a *visible sign* argues for his *personal existence*. This is found in Mat. 3:16; Lk. 3:22; Jn. 1:32. Luke speaks first in general that he descended “in a bodily shape” or appearance; and they all agree that it was the shape of a dove in which he appeared. The words in Matthew are — “He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting” (or rather coming) “upon him.” The “he” refers to John the Baptist, not Christ himself. The relative *auto* (upon him) refers, in this place, to the more remote antecedent; for although “he” (that is Christ himself) also saw the descent of the Holy Spirit, yet I suppose this relates to that token which was to be given of him to John, by which he should recognise him. (Jn. 1:32-33) The following words are ambiguous, for that expression “like a dove” may refer to the manner of his *descending* — descending (in a bodily shape) as a dove descends; or they may refer to the manner of his *appearance* — he appeared like a dove descending. And this meaning is determined in the other evangelists to refer to the bodily shape in which he descended. He took the form or shape of a dove to make a visible representation of himself; for a visible pledge was to be given in the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Messiah according to the promise, and, by this, God directed his great forerunner to a knowledge of him.

Now, this was not a real dove. Yet that would not have been a thing as miraculous as this appearance of the Holy Spirit is made out to be. And the text will not bear any such meaning, though it was entertained by some of the ancients; for it is evident that this shape of a dove came out of heaven. John saw the heavens opened and the dove descending; that is, out of heaven, which was opened to make way, as it were, for him. Moreover, the expression of the *opening* of the heavens is used only with regard to some appearance or manifestation of God himself. And so (or, which is the same) the *bowing* of the heavens is often used — “Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down” (Ps. 144:5) See also 2 Sam. 22:10; Is. 64:1; Ezek. 1:1 “The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God”, as in Acts 7:56. God did not use this sign except as in some manifestation of himself; and had not this been an appearance of God, there would have been no need of bowing or opening the heavens for it. And it is clearly said that it was not a dove, but the shape or representation of a dove. It was “a bodily shape”, and that “of a dove.”

As, then, at the beginning of the old creation, the Spirit of God came and “moved” upon the waters (Gen. 1:2), cherishing the whole, and communicating a prolific and life-giving quality to it, like a fowl or dove in particular gently broods upon its eggs, until, with and by its generative warmth, it communicates vital heat to them. So now, at the beginning of the creation, he comes as a dove upon him who was the immediate author of it, and virtually comprised it in himself, carrying it on by virtue of his presence with him. And this is applied in the Syriac ritual of baptism, composed by Severinus, in the account given of the baptism of Christ — “And the Spirit of Holiness descended, flying in the likeness of a dove,

and rested upon him, and moved on the waters.” And in the assumption of this form, there may be made some reference to the dove that brought tidings to Noah of the ceasing of the flood of waters and of the ending of the wrath of God, who declared that he would curse the earth no more (Gen. 8:11, 21); for here, also, there was a significant representation of him who visited poor lost mankind in her cursed condition, and proclaimed peace to those who would return to God by his Son, the great peace-maker. (Eph. 2:14-17) And this work he immediately engaged in with the resting of this dove upon him. Besides, there is a natural aptness in that creature to represent the Spirit which rested on the Lord Jesus; for the known nature and course of a dove is such as to remind us of purity and harmless innocence. Hence, we remember that direction — “Be harmless as doves.” (Mat. 10:16) So also the sharpness of its sight or eyes (as in the Song of Solomon 1:15, 4:1) is chosen to represent a keen and discerning understanding, such as was in Christ from the resting of the Spirit upon him. (Is. 11:2-4)

The *shape* that appeared was that of a dove, but the substance itself, I think, was of a *fiery nature*, an ethereal substance, shaped in the form or resemblance of a dove. It had the shape of a dove, but not the appearance of feathers, colours, and such like. This also rendered the appearance the more visible, conspicuous, heavenly, and glorious. The Holy Spirit is often compared with fire because he was, of old, typified or represented by fire; for on the first solemn offering of sacrifices, there came fire from the Lord for the kindling of them. Thus Theodotion of old rendered Gen. 4:4 — “The LORD had respect unto Abel, and to his offering”, when “God fired the offering of Abel”; that is, sent down fire that kindled his sacrifice as a token of its acceptance. However, it is certain that, at the first erection of the altar in the wilderness, at the first sacrifices —

“...fire came out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.” (Lev. 9:24)

And the fire kindled by it was to be perpetuated on the altar, so that none was ever to be used in sacrifice but what originated from there. For a neglect of this intimation of the mind of God, we find Nadab and Abihu consumed. (Lev. 10:1-2) So it was also with the dedication of the altar in Solomon’s temple —

“Fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices.” (2 Chron. 7:1)

And a fire kindled in this way was always kept burning on the altar. In the same way, God bore testimony to the ministry of Elijah. (1 Kings 18:38-39) God, in all these, signified that no sacrifices were acceptable to him where faith was not kindled in the heart of the offerer by the Holy Spirit, represented by the fire that kindled the sacrifices on the altar. And, in answer to this, is our Lord Jesus Christ offering himself “through the eternal Spirit.” (Heb. 9:14) It was, therefore, most probably a fiery appearance that was made.

And in the next bodily shape which he assumed, it is expressly said that it was fiery — “There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire” (Acts 2:3), which was the visible token of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them. And he chose then the figure of “tongues” to denote the assistance which, by the miraculous gift of speaking in different tongues, together with wisdom and utterance he furnished for the preaching of the gospel. And thus, also, the Lord Christ is said to “baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” (Mat. 3:11) Not two things are intended here, but the latter words “and with fire” are added, and the expression is “with the Holy Spirit”, who is a spiritual, divine, eternal fire. Thus God is said to be a “consuming fire”. (Heb. 12:29; Deut. 4:24)

And, as in these words, “He shall baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire”, there is a prospect as to what would come to pass afterwards, when the apostles received the Holy Spirit with a visible pledge of fiery tongues. So there seems to be a prediction by way of allusion, to what is recorded (see Is. 6:6-7), there was taken a living or “fiery coal from the altar”, where the fire represented the Holy Spirit, or his work and grace, when, having touched the lips of his prophet, his sin was taken away, both as to the guilt and filth of it. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit, who not only sanctifies us, but, by creating faith in us, and the applying the promise to us, is the cause and means of our justification also (1 Cor. 6:11; Tit. 3:4-7), by which our sins, on both accounts, are taken away. Also, his power, in other passages, is compared with fire and burning —

“When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgement, and by the spirit of burning.” (Is. 4:4-5)

He is compared both with *fire* and *water*, with regard to the same cleansing virtue in both. See also Mal. 3:2. Hence, as this is expressed by “the Holy Spirit and fire” in two Gospel writers (Mat. 3:11; Lk. 3:16), so in the other two there is mention only of the “Holy Spirit” (Mk. 1:8; Jn. 1:33); but the same thing is meant. I have added these things by the way to make clear the manner of this divine appearance, which also belonged to the economy of the Spirit.

Now, I say that this appearance of the Holy Spirit in a bodily shape, where he was represented by that which is a substance and has a subsistence of its own, shows that he himself is a substance and has a subsistence of his own; for if he is no such thing, but a mere influential effect of the power of God, we are not taught a right understanding of him, but mere mistakes by this appearance, for of such an accident there can be no substantial figure or resemblance made but what is monstrous. It is rejected by our adversaries (Crellius *de Natur. Spir. Sanc.*) —

Objection

“That a dove is no person, because it is not endued with an understanding which is essentially required for the constitution of a person; and therefore, “no argument can be taken from this for the personality of the Holy Spirit.”

Answer

But it is enough that he was represented by a *subsisting substance*; which, if they will grant him to be, we shall quickly prove that he is endued with a divine understanding, and so is completely a person. And whereas they further object —

Objection

“That if the Holy Spirit in the appearance intended to show himself to be a divine person, he would have appeared as a man, who is a person, for so God, or an angel in his name, appeared under the Old Testament.”

Answer

Here is an argument of no more importance than the preceding objection. The Holy Spirit showed himself as it seemed good to him; and some reasons for the instructive use of the shape of a fiery dove we have given earlier. Neither did God of old appear only in a human

shape. He did so sometimes in a burning fiery bush (Ex. 3:2, 4); and sometimes in a pillar of fire or a cloud. (Ex. 14:24) Moreover, the appearances of God under the Old Testament, as I have shown elsewhere, were all of them of the second Person; and he assumed a human shape as a prelude to, and a signification of, his future personal assumption of our nature. No such thing being intended by the Holy Spirit, he could represent himself in whatever shape he pleased. Yes, the representation of himself under a human shape would have been dangerous and unsafe for us; for it would have repeated the use of those instructive appearances under the Old Testament teaching for the incarnation of the Son of God. And also, that the sole reason for such appearances being removed — namely, that they had all regard to the incarnation of the second Person — as they would have been by the same appearance of the third, there would have been a danger of conveying a false idea of the Deity to the minds of men; for some might, from this, have conceived that God had a bodily shape like to us, when none could ever be so sure as to imagine him to be like a dove. And these, with the similar testimonies in *general*, are given as to the *divine personality* of the Holy Spirit.

I shall next consider those *personal properties* which are particularly and distinctly ascribed to him.

Firstly, *understanding* or *wisdom*, the first inseparable properties of an intelligent subsistence, are so ascribed to him in their acts and effects in 1 Cor. 2:10 — “The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” What Spirit is intended here is declared clearly in verse 12 — “Now we have not received the spirit of the world”, that is to act by the evil spirit, “but the Spirit which is of God” — a special description of the Holy Spirit. So he is called “his Spirit” in verse 10 — “God hath revealed these things unto us by his Spirit.” Now, “to search” is an act of understanding; and the Spirit is said to search because of what he knows (verse 11) — “What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” The Holy Spirit is intimate with all its own thoughts and counsels — “even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” And, by him, they are revealed to us, for, by him “we know the things that are freely given to us of God.” (Verse 12) These things cannot be spoken of anyone but a person endued with understanding. And he thus “searcheth the deep things of God” — that is, the mysteries of his will, counsel, and grace — and is, then, a divine Person who has an infinite understanding, as is said of God in Is. 40:28 — There is no “end”, measure, or investigation, “of his understanding”; and then Ps. 147:5 — there is “no number of his understanding” — it is endless, boundless, infinite.

Objection

This was rejected by Jonas Schlichtingus, (*de Trinitat.*, p. 605) —

“That the Spirit is not here taken for the Spirit himself, nor does the apostle express what the Spirit himself does, but what, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, men are enabled to do. By that, believers are helped to search into the deep counsels of God.”

Answer

But as this argument is directly against the words of the text, so the context will by no means allow it; for the apostle gives an account how the wisdom, counsels, and deep things of God, which the world cannot understand, were now preached and declared to the church. “God”, says he, “hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” But how come the Spirit himself, the author of these revelations, is acquainted with these things? This he does from his own nature, by which he knows or “searcheth all things, yea, the deep

things of God.” (1 Cor. 2:10) It is, therefore, the revelation made by the Spirit to the apostles and penmen of the Scriptures of the New Testament — who were *acted on by the Holy Spirit* in the same way as were the holy men of old (2 Pet. 1:21) — which the apostle confirmed, and not the illumination and teaching of believers in the knowledge of the mysteries by them revealed, of which the apostle is referring with these words. But who is this Spirit? The same apostle tells us that the “judgements of God are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out” (Rom. 11:33), and asks, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor?” (Verse 35) And yet this Spirit is said to “search all things, yea, the deep things of God”, those things which, to all creatures, are absolutely unsearchable and past finding out. This, then, is the Spirit of God himself, who is God also; for so it is in the prophet from where these words were taken —

“Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”
(Is. 40:13)

It will not relieve the adversaries of the Holy Spirit, though it is pleaded by them, that he is compared with, and opposed to, to the “spirit of a man” (1 Cor. 2:11), which, they say, is not a person; for no comparisons hold in all circumstances. The spirit of a man is his rational soul, endued with understanding and knowledge. This is an individual intelligent substance, capable of subsistence in a separate condition. Grant the Spirit of God to be so far a Person, and all their pretences fall to the ground. And whereas it is affirmed by one among ourselves, though otherwise asserting “the deity of the Holy Spirit” (the Arminian John Goodwin, p. 175) —

“That this expression of ‘searching the things of God’ cannot be applied directly to the Spirit, but must intend his enabling us to search into them, because to search includes imperfection, and the use of means to come to the knowledge of anything.”

This is not of much weight in this matter; for such acts are ascribed to God with respect to their effects. And searching being with us, the means of attaining perfect knowledge of anything, the perfection of the knowledge of God, is being expressed here.

So David prayed that God would “search him, and know his heart.” (Ps. 139:23) And he is often said to “search the hearts of men”, where his infinite wisdom is intimated, and where all things are open and naked. So his Spirit is said to “search the deep things of God” because of his infinite understanding, and the perfection of his knowledge, before which they lie open. And as things are here spoken of the Spirit with reference to God the Father, so they are spoken of him with reference to the Spirit — “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:27) Added to this, the Spirit is the author of wisdom and understanding in and towards others, and, therefore, he must have these attributes in himself; and that not virtually or casually only, but formally too. Wisdom and knowledge are reckoned among the gifts bestowed by him. (1 Cor. 12:8) For those of faith and tongues, it is enough that they are in him virtually; but as for wisdom and understanding, they cannot be given by any but him who is wise, and understands what he does; and hence is called expressly a “Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and knowledge.” (Is. 11:2)

I could confirm this with other testimonies, where other effects of understanding are ascribed to him, such as in 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Peter 1:21; but what I have said is enough for our purpose.

Secondly, a *will* is ascribed to him. This is the most eminent distinguishing characteristic and attribute of any person. Whoever is endued with an intelligent will is a person; and it

cannot, by any fiction, with any tolerable plainness, be ascribed to anything else, unless the reason for the metaphor is plain and obvious. So when our Saviour says of the wind that it blows “as it willeth” or “listeth” (Jn. 3:8), the use of the word is evident. All that is intended is that the wind, as to us, is not at all at our disposal, not acting by our guidance or direction. And no one is as foolish as not to understand the meaning of it, or at once to inquire whether our Saviour properly ascribes a will to the wind or not. See James 3:4. The words rendered by us, “Turned about with a very small helm, wherever the governor listeth” are in the original, in which the act of willing is ascribed to the impetus or inclination of the governor, which yet has no will. But the impetus in that place is not the impetus of the philosophers, the *motus primo-primus* (the first agitation or inclination of the mind), but is the will itself under an earnest inclination, such as is usual with those who govern ships by the helms in storms. Here the act of willing is properly ascribed, and he in whom it is proved to exist is a Person. Thus, a will acting with understanding and choice, as the principle and cause of its outward actions, is ascribed to the Holy Spirit —

“All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” (1 Cor. 12:11)

Paul earlier asserted that the Spirit was the author and donor of all the spiritual gifts he had been discussing (verses 4-6). These gifts he declares to be various, as he shows with nine examples, and all are variously disposed of by him (verses 8-10). If now we inquire what is the rule of this distribution of them, he tells us that it is his *own will*, his choice and pleasure. What can be spoken more fully and clearly to describe an intelligent person, acting voluntarily with freedom and by choice, I don’t know!

Objection

We will consider here what is further objected to. They say (as in Jonas Schlichting. p. 610) —

“That the Holy Spirit is here introduced as a person by a *prosopopioeia* [a rhetorical device in which a speaker or writer communicates to the audience by speaking as another person or object] — that the distribution of the gifts mentioned is ascribed to him by a metaphor; and, by the same or another metaphor, he is said to have a will, or to act as he will.”

But is it not evident that if this way of interpreting, or rather of perverting, Scripture is allowed, nothing of any certainty is left to us here? It is but saying this or that is a metaphor, and if one will not serve, bring in two or three, one hanging on the neck of another, and the work is done — the meaning intended is quite changed and lost. Allow this liberty or bold licence, and you may overthrow the being of God himself and the mediation of Christ, as to any testimony given to them in Scripture. But the words are clear — “He divideth to every man severally as he will.” (1 Cor. 12:11) And as for the confirmation of his deity, though that seems to be ruled out of the question on the denial of his personality, I only add, from this passage, that he who has the sovereign disposal of all spiritual gifts, has his own will also, which is infinitely wise and holy. As for his rule, like the Son, he is “over all, God blessed for ever.” (Rom. 9:5)

Thirdly, another property of a living person is *power*, a power by which anyone is able to act under to the guidance of his understanding and the determination of his will, which declares him to be a person. It is not the mere ascription of power absolutely, or the ability to do anything, that I mean; for they may signify no more but the power with which such things are attended to in their rightful places, as instruments of the effects to which they are applied. In this sense, power is ascribed to the Word of God when it is said to be “able

to save our souls". (Jas. 1:21; and Acts 20:32) "The word of God's grace" is said to be "able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified", if that passage means the Word written or preached (into which I have already made inquiry elsewhere): but these things are clearly interpreted in other passages. The Word is said to be "able", yes, to be the "power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16), because God is pleased to use it, and make it effective by his grace for that end. But where power, divine power, is absolutely ascribed to anyone, and declared to be issued and exercised by the understanding, and according to the will, of him to whom it is so ascribed, it undeniably proves him to be a *divine Person*; for when we say the Holy Spirit is so, we intend no more but that he is the one who, by his own divine understanding puts forth his own divine power. So it is in this case — "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." (Job 33:4) Creation is an act of divine power, the highest idea of which we are capable of receiving; and it is also an effect of the wisdom and will of him that creates, as being a voluntary act, and designed for a certain end. All these, then, are here ascribed to the Spirit of God.

Objection

It is objected (Schlichting. pp. 613-615) —

"...that by the 'Spirit of God' mentioned here, no more is intended but our own vital spirits, by which we are quickened, called the 'Spirit of God' because he gave it."

Answer

But this is said far too confidently. There were two distinct divine operations in and about the creation of man. The first was the forming of his body out of the dust of the earth; this is expressed by "he made", and "he formed". And secondly, the infusion of a living or quickening soul into him called "the breath of life". Both of these are distinctly mentioned; the first is ascribed to the Spirit of God, the other to his breath — that is, the same Spirit considered in a particular method of operation in the infusion of the rational soul. Such is the sense of these figurative and enigmatic words — "God breathed into man the breath of life"; that is, by his Spirit, he effected a principle of life in him, as we shall see later. (Is. 11:2) As he is called a "Spirit of wisdom and understanding", so he is also of "might" or power. And although it may be granted that the things mentioned there are the effects of his operations rather than adjuncts of his nature, yet he who affects wisdom and power in others must first have them himself. To this purpose, also, comes that demand — "Is the Spirit of the LORD straitened" or shortened? (Mic. 2:7) That means, in his power, as against the objection that he cannot work and operate in the prophets and his church as in former days. The same prophet (Mic. 3:8) affirms that he is "full of power, and of judgement, and of might, by the Spirit of the LORD." These things were produced by him with his power, as the apostle says to the same purpose in Eph. 3:16.

Those by whom this truth is opposed expend all their strength and skill in their objections — I may call them empty arguments — against some of these particular testimonies, and some expressions found in them; but as to the whole argument, taken from the consideration of the design and scope of the Scripture in them all, they have no issue to win.

To finish this argument, I add a consideration of those *works* and *operations* of all sorts which are ascribed to the Spirit of God; which we shall find to be those that are not capable of being assigned to him with the least plainness of speech, or design of speaking

intelligibly, unless he is a distinct, singular, subsistent Person, endued with divine power and understanding. And here, what I desired formerly to be observed must be repeated again. It is not from a single instance of every one of the works which I shall mention to we draw out and confirm our argument; for some of them, considered singly, may perhaps sometimes be metaphorically ascribed to other causes, which does not prove that, therefore, they are persons also — which contains the force of all the objections of our critics against these testimonies — but as some of them, at least, never are, nor can be, assigned, to any but a divine Person, so we take our argument from their joint consideration, or the uniform, constant assigning of them all to him in the Scriptures: which make it indisputable.

As for the things themselves, I shall not insist on them here, because their particular nature must be carefully unfolded.

In the first place, he is said to *teach us* — “The Holy Spirit shall teach you what ye ought to say.” (Lk. 12:12)

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance.” (Jn. 14:26)

He is the “anointing which teacheth us all things” (1 Jn. 2:27). How and where he is so called will be discussed later. He is the great Teacher of the church, to whom the accomplishment of that great promise is committed — “And they shall be all taught of God”. (Jn. 6:45) It is sad when, in the church of God, her teachers are put in a corner, and her eyes no longer see them; but better lose all other teachers, and that utterly, than to lose this great Teacher alone: for although he is pleased to make use of the teachers, he can teach effectively and savingly without them when they are removed and taken away; but they cannot teach without him to the least spiritual advantage. And those who pretend to be teachers of others, and yet despise his teaching assistance, will, one day, find that they were undertaking a work which was none of theirs.

Objection

But as to our use of this assertion, it may be objected —

“...that the apostle affirms that nature also teaches us” (1 Cor. 11:14) — Does not even nature itself teach you? Now, nature is not a person.”

Answer

This is the way and method of those with whom we have to do. If any word in a testimony produced by us has been anywhere used metaphorically, though it may be never so evident that it is so used in that place, instantly, it must have the same figurative application in the testimony objected to, although they can give no reason why it should so signify! And if this course of objecting is allowed, there will be nothing left intelligible in Scripture, nor in any other author, nor in common speech, in the world; for there is scarcely any word or name of a thing but, one way or other, is, or has been, abused or used metaphorically. In particular, nature in this passage of the apostle is said to teach us objectively, as the heavens and earth teach us what we learn from them; for it is said to teach us what we may learn from the customs and actions of those who live, proceed, and act, according to the principles, dictates, and inclinations of the saying. Everyone sees that here is no intimation of an active teaching by instruction, or a real communication of knowledge, but it is said figuratively to do what we do with regard to it. And not only in

several passages, but in the same sentence, a word may be used rightly with respect to one thing, and abusively with respect to another; as in that saying of the poet —

Disce, puer, virtutem ex me, verumque laborum fortunam ex aliis.
“Learn, boy, virtue from me, for true industry is the fate of another.”
(Virgil, *Æn.* 12:435)

These things, then, are very different, and their difference is obvious to all. But we are arguing not merely from this or that particular instance.

Let anyone not too full of prejudice read over that discourse of our Saviour to his disciples, where he purposely instructs them in the nature and work of the Spirit of God, on whom, as it were, he then devolved the care of them and the gospel, according to the promise (John chapters 14-16); and he will need no further instruction or confirmation in this matter. The Spirit is there frequently called “The Comforter”, the name of a Person, and that vested with an office with regard to the work that he would do, and “another Comforter” in answer and conformity to the Lord Christ, who was one Comforter and a Person, as all agree. (Jn. 14:16, 26) If he is not so, the meaning of this expression in these circumstances must be to deceive us, and not instruct us. He tells them, moreover, that he is one whom the world neither sees nor knows, but who abides with, and dwells in, believers (verse 17); one whom the Father would send, and who would come accordingly, to teach them, to lead and guide them, and to bring things to their remembrance (verse 26); a Comforter that would come and testify or bear witness to him (Jn. 15:26); one that would be sent by him “to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement” (Jn. 16:7-8), and remain with his disciples to supply his own bodily absence. So he is said to “speak”, “guide”, “teach”, and “hear”; to “receive of Christ’s, and to show it to others” (Jn. 14:26, 16:13-14); with various other things of the same nature and importance.

And these things are not spoken of him occasionally or *in transit* (in transit), but in a direct continual discourse, designed on purpose by our Lord Jesus Christ to acquaint his disciples with whom the Spirit is, and what he would do for them. And if there is nothing spoken of him in the whole Scripture but what is here declared by our Saviour, all unprejudiced men must and would acknowledge him to be a divine Person. And it is a confidence, swelling above all bounds of modesty, to suppose that because one or other of these things is, or may, be metaphorically or metaleptically [substituting the name of an attribute or feature for the name of the thing itself] ascribed to this or that thing which are not persons, when the figurativeness of such an ascription is plain and open, that therefore, they are all of them in the same way so ascribed to the Holy Spirit in that discourse of our Saviour to his disciples, where he designed the instruction of them, as I said earlier. Of the same nature is that which we discoursed before concerning his searching of all things (from 1 Cor. 2:10); which, as it proves him to be an understanding agent, so it undeniably denotes a personal action. Such also are the things mentioned in Rom, 8:16, 26 — He “helpeth our infirmities”, he “maketh intercession for us”, he himself “beareth witness with our spirit”, the particular meaning of all these expressions I shall inquire into later.

Here, the only refuge of our adversaries is to cry up a *prosopopoeia* (Schlichting. p. 627). But how can they prove it? Only by saying that “these things belong properly to a person, which the Spirit is not.” Now, this is nothing but to set up their own false hypothesis against our arguments, and, not being able to contend with the premises, deny the conclusion.

There are two other places of this nature, both to the same purpose, sufficient in themselves to confirm our faith in the truth pleaded for; and these are —

“As they ministered unto the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed.” (Acts 13:2, 4)

The other is —

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers.” (Acts 20:28)

These passages affirm the same truth; and what is reported in an extraordinary case, as a matter of fact in the first is doctrinally applied to ordinary cases in the latter. And **two** things are remarkable in the first place —

1. The Holy Spirit’s designation of himself as the Person *unto whom* and whose work Barnabas and Saul were to be separated and dedicated. Says he, not “Separate me”, as in our translation, making the Spirit only the author of the command, but “Separate unto me”, which proposes him also as the object of the duty required, and the Person whose work was to be attended to. Who, or what, then, is intended by that pronoun “me”? Some person is referred to, and signified by it; nor can any instance be given where it is so much as figuratively used unless it can be found in a professed parable. That remains, then, to be inquired into. Who is meant by that word “me”? The words are the words of the Holy Spirit — “The Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate unto me.’” The Spirit, therefore, is alone intended. All the answer that the wit and diligence of our adversaries can invent is that “these words are ascribed to the Holy Spirit because the prophets that were in the church of Antioch spake therein by his instinct and inspiration.” But in this evasion, there is no regard to the force of our argument; for we do not argue merely from his being said *to speak*, but from *what is spoken* by him, “Separate unto me”, and inquire whether the prophets are included in that word or not? If so, which of them? For they were many by whom the Holy Spirit spoke the same thing, and *someone* must be intended in common by them all; and to say that this was any of the prophets is foolish, indeed, blasphemous.

2. The close of the second verse confirms this application of the word — “For the work whereunto I have called them.” This obviously is the Holy Spirit. Now, to call men to the ministry is a free act of authority, choice, and wisdom; which are properties of a person, and none other. Nor is either the Father or the Son in Scripture introduced more directly clothed with personal properties than the Holy Spirit in this passage. And the whole is confirmed in verse 4 — “So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed.” He *called* them, by furnishing them with ability and authority for their work; he *commanded* them to be set apart by the church, that they might be blessed and owned in their work; and he *sent them forth*, by the stamp of his authority on their minds, given to them by those former acts of his. And if a divine Person is not described here, then who is it?

The other text speaks to the same purpose. In Acts 20:28, it is expressly said that the Holy Spirit to him. And here there is no room left for evasion; for these words were not spoken by way of prophecy, nor in the name of the Holy Spirit, but concerning him. And they are an explanation of the other; for he must be meant in these expressions — “Separate unto me those whom I have called”, by whom they are made ministers. Now, this was the Holy Spirit; for he makes the overseers of the church. And we do well to take note that, if he did so then, he does so now; for the overseers were not extraordinarily inspired or called that the apostle intends, but the ordinary officers of the church. And if such people are not called and constituted officers, as at the first, in ordinary cases, the church is not the same

as it was. And it is the concern of those who undertake this work and office to consider what there is in the whole undertaking that they can ascribe to the Holy Spirit. People furnished with no spiritual gifts or abilities, entering into the ministry in pursuit of secular advantages, will not easily satisfy themselves in this inquiry, when they are willing, or forced, and at last make it.

There remains yet *one category of testimonies* for the same purpose, which must briefly be added: and they are those where he is spoken of as the *object* of such *actions* of men as none but a *Person* can be. For let them be applied to any other object, and their inconsistency will soon appear. Thus he is said to be *tempted* by those who fall into it — “How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord”. (Acts 5:9)

In whatever sense this word is used — whether that in which it is indifferent, *to test*, as God is said to tempt Abraham, or in that which is evil, *to provoke or induce to sin* — it never is, nor can ever be, used but with respect to a person. How can a quality, an accident, an emanation of power from God, be tempted? None can possibly be so; but whoever has an understanding will consider what is proposed to him, and a will to make a determination of the proposal made. So Satan tempted our first parents; so men are tempted by their own lusts; so we are said to tempt God when we provoke him by our unbelief, or when we inexcusably make experiments of his power. So they “tempted the Holy Spirit” by sinfully venturing on his omniscience, as if he would not, or could not, discover their sin, or, on his holiness, that he would overlook their deceit. In the same way, Ananias was said to “*lie* to the Holy Spirit” (Acts 5:3); and none is capable of lying to any other but one who is capable of hearing and receiving a testimony, for a lie is a false testimony given to that which it is spoken or uttered. Thus, he who is lied to must be capable of judging and determining its truthfulness; which, without personal properties of will and understanding could not be done. The Holy Spirit is here, then, declared to be a Person in that he is declared to be one who is also divine; for so the apostle Peter declares in the exposition of the words in verse 4 — “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” These things are so plain and positive that the faith of believers will not be concerned in the dogmatic evasions of our adversaries. In the same way, he is said to be *resisted*, (Acts 7:51); which is the moral reaction or opposition of one person to another. So also is he said to be *grieved*, or we are commanded not to grieve him (Eph. 4:30), as they of old were said to have “rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit of God.” (Isaiah 63:10)

A figurative expression is found in these words. Properly, the Spirit of God cannot be grieved or vexed, for these things include such imperfections as are inconsistent with the divine nature. But as God is said to “repent” and to be “grieved at his heart” (Gen. 6:6) when he would do things corresponding with what men will do, or judge fit to be done, at such provocations, and when he would declare what effects they would produce in a nature capable of such disturbances, so, for the same reason, is the Spirit of God said to be grieved and vexed. But this can no way be spoken of him if he is not one whose relation to sin may, from the analogy of human persons, be represented by this figurative expression. To talk of grieving a virtue, or an actual emanation of power, is to say something of which no one can understand the meaning or intention. Surely, he that is thus tempted, resisted, and grieved by sin and sinners, is one who can understand, judge, and determine concerning them; and these things being elsewhere absolutely spoken concerning God, it shows that he is so with regard to those who are mentioned in particular.

The whole of the truth we are fighting for is yet more evident in that discourse of our Saviour in Mat. 12:24. The Pharisees said — “He doth not cast out devils, but by

Beelzebub, the prince of devils.” And Jesus replied (verse 28) — “If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” Verses 31-32 —

“Wherefore I say unto you, ‘All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men.’ And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him.”

To the same purpose, see Lk. 12:8-10. The Spirit is here expressly distinguished from the Son, as one Person to another. They are both spoken of with regard to the same things in the same way, and the things mentioned are spoken concerning them universally in the same sense. Now, if the Holy Spirit were only the virtue and power of God, then present with Jesus Christ in all that he did, Christ and that power could not be distinctly spoken against, for they were but one and the same. The Pharisees blasphemed, saying that “he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils”; it was a person they intended, and so expressed him by his name, nature, and office. To which our Saviour replies that he cast them out by the Spirit of God — a divine Person, opposed to the one who is diabolical. To this, he immediately adds his instruction and warning that they should take heed how they blasphemed the Holy Spirit by assigning his effects and works to the prince of devils. And blasphemy against him directly proves both what and who he is, especially such a peculiar blasphemy that carries a load of guilt along with it, above all that human nature in any other instance is capable of. It is supposed that blasphemy may be against the Person of the Father: so was it with him who “blasphemed the name of Jehovah and cursed” by it. (Lev. 24:11) The Son, as to his distinct Person, may be blasphemed; so it is said here expressly — and here it is added that the Holy Spirit also may be *distinctly blasphemed*, or be made the immediate object of that sin which is declared to be unforgiveable. To suppose now that this Holy Spirit is not a divine Person is for men to dream about while they seem to be awake.

I am sure that by all these testimonies we have fully confirmed what we set out to prove by them — namely, that the Holy Spirit is *not a quality*, as some say, residing in the divine nature; not a mere *emanation* of virtue and power from God; not the acting of the power of God in and for our sanctification; but a *holy intelligent subsistent* or Person. And, in our quotations, many instances have been given, where it is undeniably evident that he is a *divine, self-sufficient, self-subsisting* Person, together with the Father and the Son, equally participant of the divine nature. Nor is this much disputed by those we are opposing us; for they confess that such things are ascribed to him as none but God can effect. Wherefore, denying him so to be, they lay up all their hopes of success in denying him to be a Person. But yet, because the subject we are dealing with requires it, and it may be useful for the faith of some, I will call in a few more testimonies which expressly define his deity also.

First of all, he is expressly called *God*; and having the *name* of God properly and directly given to him, with respect to spiritual things, or things peculiar to God, he must have the *nature* of God also. In Acts 5:3, Ananias is said to “lie to the Holy Spirit”. This is repeated and interpreted in verse 4 — “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” The declaration of the Person intended as the “Holy Spirit” is added for the aggravation of the sin, for he is “God”. The same person, the same object of the sin of Ananias, is expressed in both places; and, therefore, the Holy Spirit is God. The word for *lying* is the same in both places, only it is used with a various construction. In verse 3, it has the accusative case joined to it — that “thou shouldst deceive”, or think to deceive, or attempt to deceive, “the Holy Spirit.” How? By lying to him, in making a profession in the church in which he presides of that which is false. This is explained in verse 4 by “thou hast lied unto God”, the nature of his sin being principally intended in the first place, and the object in the latter.

Wherefore, in the progress of his discourse, the apostle calls the same sin in verse 9 a “tempting of the Spirit of the Lord”; it was the Spirit of the Lord that he lied to when he lied to God. These three expressions, “the Holy Spirit”, “God”, “the Spirit of the Lord,” denote the same thing and Person, or there is no coherence in the discourse. Our critics object “that what is done against the Spirit is done against God, because he is sent by God.” It is true, as he is sent by the Father, so what is done against him is morally, and as to the guilt of it, done against the Father. And so our Saviour tells us with respect to what was done against himself, for, says he, “He that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.” But directly and immediately, both Christ and the Spirit were sinned against in their own Persons. It is “God” who is provoked here. So also he is called “Lord”, in the sense appropriate to God alone — “Now the Lord is that Spirit” and “we are changed from glory to glory by the Lord the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17-18), or by the Spirit of the Lord; where also divine operations are ascribed to him. What is affirmed to this purpose in 1 Cor. 12:6-8 has been observed in the opening of that chapter, and at the beginning of our discourse. The same, also, is drawn by just consequence from the comparing of Scriptures together, where what is spoken of God absolutely in one place is applied directly and immediately to the Holy Spirit in another. To instance in one or two particulars — “I will,” says God, “set my tabernacle among you; and I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.” (Lev. 26:11-12) The accomplishment of this promise the apostle describes in 2 Cor. 6:16 — “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

How and by whom is this done?

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which ye are.” (1 Cor. 3:16-17)

If it were, then, God, who of old, promised to dwell in his people, and make them his temple, then so too is the Holy Spirit God; for it is he who, according to that promise, dwells in them. So in Deut. 32:12, speaking of the people in the wilderness, he says —

“The LORD alone did lead him”; and yet, speaking of the same people, at the same time, it is said, that “the Spirit of the LORD did lead them, and caused them to rest.” (Is. 63:14).

“The Spirit of the LORD”, therefore, is Jehovah, or Jehovah alone did not lead them. That, also, which is called in the same people their “sinning against God, and provoking the Most High in the wilderness” (Ps. 78:17-18), is termed their “rebelling against and vexing the Holy Spirit.” (Is. 63:10-11) And many other instances of a similar nature have been pleaded and defended by others. Add to this, in the last place, that *divine properties* are assigned to him, such as *eternity*, for he is the “eternal Spirit” (Heb. 9:14), *immensity*, “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?” (Ps. 139:7) — *omnipotence*, “The Spirit of the LORD is not straitened” (Mic. 2:7 compared with Is. 40:28) — “The power of the Spirit of God” (Rom. 15:19) — *prescience* (Acts 1:16) — this scripture must be fulfilled, “which the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas” — *omniscience*, “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:1-11) — and *sovereign authority* over the church (Acts 13:2, 4, 20:28). The divine works, also, which are assigned to him are usually, and to good purpose, pleaded in vindication of the same truth; but these, during the course of our discourse, I shall have occasion to consider and inquire into, and, therefore, not insist on them here.

What has been proposed, cleared, and confirmed, may be sufficient for our present purpose, that we may know *who he is*, concerning whom — in his works and grace — we intend to deal with.

I have one more thing to add concerning the *being* and *personality* of the Holy Spirit; and that is, that in the *order of subsistence*, he is the *third Person* in the holy Trinity. So it is expressed in the solemn naming of them, where their order gives great direction to gospel worship and obedience — “Baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (Mat. 28:19) This order I confess, in their naming, is because of the equality of the Persons of the same nature, is sometimes varied. Thus —

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 1:4-5)

The Holy Spirit, under the name of “the seven Spirits before the throne of God”, because of his varied and perfect operations in and towards the church, is reckoned up in order before the Son, Jesus Christ. And so, in Paul’s supplicatory conclusion to his epistles, the Son is placed before the Father — “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” (2 Cor. 13:14) And some think that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in first place — “The acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.” (Col. 2:2)

In this expression of them, therefore, we may use our liberty, as they are all One — “God over all, blessed for ever.” (Rom 9:5) But in their true and natural order of subsistence, and consequently of operation, the Holy Spirit is the third Person; for as to his personal subsistence, he “proceedeth from the Father and the Son” (Jn. 15:26), being equally the Spirit of them both, as I remarked earlier. This constitutes the *natural order* between the Persons, which is unalterable. On this, depends the order of his operation; for his working is a consequence of the order of his subsistence. Thus the Father is said to send him, and so is the Son also. (Jn. 14:16, 26, 16:7) And he is thus said to be sent by the Father and the Son because he is the Spirit of the Father and Son, proceeding from both, and is the next cause in the application of the Trinity to external works. But as he is sent, so his own will is equally in and for the work for which he was sent; as the Father is said to send the Son, and yet it was also his own love and grace to come to us and to save us. And this arises from this fact, that in the whole economy of the Trinity, as to the works that outwardly are of God, especially the works of grace, the order of the subsistence of the Persons in the same nature is presented to us, and they have the same dependence on each other in their operations as they have in their subsistence. The Father is the fountain of all, as in being and existence, so also in operation. The Son is of the Father, begotten of him, and, therefore, as to his work, is sent by him; but his own will is in and for what he is sent to do. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, and, therefore, is sent and given by them as to all the works he immediately effects; but yet his own will is the direct principle of all that he does — he divides to everyone according to his own will. This much may suffice to be spoken about the being of the Holy Spirit, and the order of his subsistence in the blessed Trinity.

CHAPTER 4

THE SPECIAL WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE FIRST OR OLD CREATION

Things to be observed in divine operations — The works of God, how ascribed absolutely to God, and how distinctly to each Person — The reason for this — Perfecting acts in divine works ascribed to the Holy Spirit, and why — Special works of the Spirit with respect to the old creation — The parts of the old creation — Heaven and its host — What is the host of heaven — The host of the earth — The host of heaven completed by the Spirit — And of the earth — His moving in the old creation (Ps. 104:30) — The creation of man; the work of the Spirit in this — The work of the Spirit in the preservation of all things when created, natural and moral — Further examples of this in and out of the church — The work of the Spirit of God in the old creation, and why sparingly delivered.

I INTEND to deal now with the *operations of the Holy Spirit*, or those which are special to him, and some things must be premised concerning the operation of the Godhead in general, and the way they work; and they are such as are needful to guide us in many passages of Scripture, and to direct us aright in the things in particular which now lie before us. I say, then —

1. That all *divine operations* are usually ascribed to *God absolutely*. So it is said that God made all things; and this is true of all his other works, whether in nature or in grace. And the reason for this is because the divine Persons are undivided in their operations, all acting by the same will, the same wisdom, and the same power. Every Person, therefore, is the author of every work of God, because each Person is God, and the divine nature is the same undivided principle of all divine operations; and this comes from the unity of the Persons in the same essence. But, as for the manner of subsistence, there is distinction, relation, and order between and among them; and hence there is no divine work but is distinctly assigned to each Person, and eminently to one. So it was in the works of the old creation, and so in the new, and in all particulars. Thus, the creation of the world is distinctly ascribed to the Father as to his work (Acts 4:24), and to the Son as his (Jn. 1:3), and also to the Holy Spirit (Job 33:4); but by way of eminence to the Father, and absolutely to God, who is indeed Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The reason, therefore, why the works of God are so distinctly ascribed to each Person is because, in the undivided operation of the divine nature, each Person does the same work in the order of their subsistence; not one as the instrument of the other, or merely employed by the other, but as one common principle of authority, wisdom, love, and power. How come they, then, eminently are assigned one to one Person, another to another? To the Father are assigned *opera naturae* (the works of nature), or the old creation; to the Son, *opera gratiae procuratae* (all divine operations that belong to the recovery of mankind by grace); and to the Spirit, *opera gratiae applicatae* (the works of God by which grace is made effective to us). And this is done —

(1) When any special impression is made of the particular property of any Person on any work, then is that work assigned particularly to that Person. So there is of the power and authority of the Father on the old creation, and the grace and wisdom of the Son on the new.

(2) Where there is a particular condescension of any Person to a work in which the others play no part except by approbation and consent. Such was the susception [taking upon oneself] of the human nature by the Son, and all that he did; and such was the condescension of the Holy Spirit also to his office, which entitles him peculiarly, and by way of eminence, to his own immediate works.

2. Whereas the *order of operation* among the distinct Persons depends on the *order of their subsistence* in the blessed Trinity, in every great work of God, the *concluding, completing, perfecting acts* are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. This we find in all their instances which fall under our consideration. Hence, the immediate actions of the Spirit are the most hidden, curious, and mysterious, as those containing the perfecting part of the works of God. Some seem willing to exclude all thoughts or mention of him from the works of God; but, indeed, without him no part of any work of God is perfect or complete. The beginning of divine operations is assigned to the Father as he is *fons et origo Deitatis* (the fountain of the Deity itself) — “Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.” (Rom. 11:36) The subsisting, establishing, and “upholding of all things” is ascribed to the Son — “He is before all things, and by him all things consist.” (Col. 1:17) As he made all things with the Father, so he gives them a coherence, a permanence, in a special way, as he is the power and wisdom of the Father. He “upholdeth all things by the word of his power.” (Heb. 1:3) Now, the finishing and perfecting of all these works is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, as we shall see. I do not say not this as though one Person succeeded to another in their operation, or as though, where one ceased and gave over a work, the other took it up and carried it on; for every divine work, and every part of every divine work, is the work of God, that is, of the whole Trinity, inseparably and undividedly: but on those divine works which outwardly are of God there is a special impression of the order of the operation of each Person, with respect to their natural and necessary subsistence, as also with regard to their internal characteristic properties, by which we are distinctly taught to know them and adore them. And a due consideration of this order of things directs us to a right understanding of the proposals that are made to our faith concerning God in his works and Word.

These things being understood, we now go on to consider those things that are the *peculiar operations* of the Holy Spirit as revealed to us in Scripture. Now, all the works of God come under **two** heads —

1. Those of *nature* — or the works of the *old* creation.
2. Those of *grace* — or the works of the *old* and *new* creation.

And we must inquire into the *special* operations of the Holy Spirit in and about these works, which I will carefully explain later. The work of the *old creation* had **two** parts —

1. That which concerned the *inanimate part* of it in general, with the influence it had on the production of animated or living but brute creatures.
2. The *rational* or *intelligent part* of it, with the law of its obedience to God, and the special uses and ends for which it was made. In both of these, we will inquire later, and consider the special works of the Holy Spirit.

The general parts of the creation are the *heavens and the earth* — “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen. 1:1) And whatever belongs to them is called their “host” — “The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.” (Gen. 2:1) The host of heaven is the sun, moon, and stars, and the angels themselves. This is how they are described in 1 Kings 22:19 — “I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left” — that is, all the holy angels, as in Daniel 7:10 and 2 Chron. 18:18. And the “host” of God is found in Gen. 32:1-2 — “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, ‘This is God’s host.’” The word used here signifies a host encamped, as in Lk. 2:13 — “the heavenly host”, or army. The sun, moon, and stars are also called the host of heaven — “Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven.” (Deut. 4:19) See also Is. 34:4 and Jer. 33:22. This was that host of heaven which the Jews idolatrously worshipped —

“They shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped.” (Jer. 8:2)

The expressions are multiplied to show that they used every way in ascribing that divine honour to them which was due to God alone, whom alone they ought to have loved, to have served, to have walked after, to have sought and worshipped. See Jer. 19:13. This they called the “queen of heaven” (Jer. 44:17) because of its beauty and adornment. The “host of the earth” means men and beasts, with all other creatures that either grow out of it, or live on it, and are nourished by it. These things are called the host of heaven and earth for two reasons —

1. Because of their order and beauty of disposition. A host properly is a number of men put into a certain order for some certain end or purpose; and all their strength and power, all their terror and beauty, consists in, and arises from, that order. Without this, they are just a confused multitude. But a host or army with banners is beautiful and terrible. (Song 6:10). Before things were cast into this order, the universe was, as it were, full of confusion; it had no beauty or glory, for the “earth was without form and void”. (Gen. 1:2) Hence the Vulgate Latin in this passage renders the word by “*ornatus eorum*”, all their beauty and adorning; for the creation and beautiful disposal of these hosts gave them beauty and ornament: and thus the Greeks call the world *kosmos* — that is, an adorned thing.

2. Because all creatures in heaven and earth are God’s armies, accomplishing his irresistible will and pleasure. Hence, he often styles himself “The LORD of hosts” — of both these hosts, that above of the heavens, the holy angels and the celestial bodies, and that of all creatures beneath in the earth; for all these he uses and applies at his pleasure, to do his will and execute his judgements. Thus, one of those angels slew a whole host of men in one night. (Is. 37:36) And it is said that the “stars in their courses fought against Sisera”. (Judg. 5:20) God overruled the influences of heaven against him, though it may be angels also are referred to here. And among the meanest creatures of the earth, he calls locusts and caterpillars, when he send them to destroy a country for its sin, his “host” or “army”. (Joel 2:11) These comments are just by the way.

Now, the forming and perfecting of *this host* of heaven and earth is that which is assigned particularly to the Spirit of God; and by him was the work of creation completed and finished. First of all, then, for the heavens — “By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent” (Job 26:13) — or rather, “his Spirit hath garnished them”, for the word means to “adorn”, to make fair, to render beautiful to the eye. Thus the heavens were “garnished” by the Spirit of God when, by the creation and

disposal of the aspectable host of them, he rendered them so glorious and beautiful as we see them today. So too the Jewish Targum — “His Spirit beautified the face of the heavens”, or gave them that comely beauty and order in which their face appears to us. Hence, the heavens, as adorned with the moon and stars, are said to be the “work of God’s fingers” (Ps. 8:3) — that is, not only those which were powerfully made, but also curiously wrought and adorned by the Spirit of God; for by the finger, or fingers, of God, the Spirit of God is, in a special way, intended. Hence come those words of our Saviour in Lk. 11:20 — “But if I with the finger of God cast out devils”, and Mat. 12:28 — “If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God.” By him, were the heavens, as it were, curiously wrought, adorned, garnished, rendered beautiful and glorious, to show forth the praise of his power and wisdom. (Ps. 19:1) And by the “crooked serpent”, which is added to the “garnishing of the heavens”, the Hebrews understood the galaxy (or Milky Way), which, to the eye, represents the moving or writhing of a serpent in the water. This, then, is particularly assigned to the Spirit with regard to the heavens and their host.

The completing, finishing work is also ascribed to him, which we must understand under the rules mentioned before, and not exclusively to the other Persons. And thus it was also as to the earth. God first created the *earth* out of nothing, which comprised the whole *inferior globe*, which afterward divided itself into seas and dry land. The *heavens* contain in that aspect of their creation all that is above and over it. The whole material mass of earth and water, which probably covered the more solid and firm substance, and, as it were, overwhelmed, is intended by that “earth” which was first created; for immediately there is mention made of the “deep” and the “waters,” without any intimation of their production but what is contained in that description of the creation of the earth. (Gen. 1:2) This mass, being thus framed and mixed, the “Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”, not taken distinctly, but as containing that radical humour which was the material principle of life and being to all creatures. The word *merachepeth* means an easy, gentle motion, such as a dove, or other bird, employs with its nest or young ones, either to communicate vital heat to its eggs, or to cherish and defend its young. But this in no way gives ground to that exposition which some give to this verse —

“*Ruach* here signifies ‘the wind,’ as it does sometimes; and it is called the ‘wind of God’ because it was great and mighty: for this figure of speech is normal in sacred language to set out the greatness and unique eminency of anything. So a great trembling is called a ‘trembling of God’ (1 Samuel 14:15); great cedars, the ‘cedars of God’ (Ps. 80:10), and such like.”

However —

1. When was this wind created? The meteors were not made before the fourth day, together with the firmament, the place of their residence. And where, or what this wind should be, is not easily discovered.

2. The word used here signifies an “easy and gentle motion” as with birds when they brood on their nests. And it is only used three times Scripture — in this verse, and Deut. 32:11, and Jer. 23:9. In Deuteronomy, it is expressly applied to the motion of an eagle over her young for their safety, protection, and growth — “As an eagle fluttereth, spreading her wings over her young.” And in the other verse we translate it “shake” — “All my bones shake” — that is, are in a trembling motion like the feathers of a bird over her nest. No such great and violent wind, therefore, as from these expressions, should be called a wind of God, and are not intended in this place; but it is the Spirit of God himself and his work that is being expressed.

This, then, was the work of the Holy Spirit of God with reference to the *earth* and its *host*. The whole matter was created from that which all living creatures were produced, and from which they were made. He takes upon himself the cherishing and preservation of it; that as it had its subsistence by the power of the Word of God, it might be carried on towards that form, order, beauty, and perfection, for which it was designed. For this purpose, he communicated to it an enlivening and prolific virtue, filling it with the seeds of animal life for all kinds of things. Hence, by God's command, it brought forth all sorts of creatures in abundance according to the seeds and principles of life which were put into the crude, unformed chaos by the cherishing motion of the Holy Spirit. Without him, all would remain a dead sea, a confused deep, with darkness on it, able to bring forth nothing, nor was prepared to bring forth any one thing than another; but by the moving of the Spirit of God on it, the principles of all those kinds, sorts, and forms of things, which, in an inconceivable variety, make up its host and ornament, and were communicated to it. This is a better account of the original of all things in their several kinds than any that is given by ancient or modern philosophers. And hence comes the old tradition of all things being formed of water, which the apostle refers to in 2 Pet. 3:5. The whole matter is examined by Cyprian, whose words I have, therefore, transcribed in many places. And as at the first creation, so in the course of providence, this work of cherishing and nourishing the creatures is assigned in a unique way to the Spirit — "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth." (Ps. 104:30) The making or creating of things here intended is not the first great work of the creation of all, but the daily production of creatures in, and according to, their kind; for in the previous verse, the Psalmist speaks of the decay of all sorts of creatures in the world by a providential cutting off and finishing of their lives — "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." (Verse 29) Under this continual decay and dying of all sorts of creatures, the world does not come to emptiness and desolation, the only reason being because the Spirit of God, whose office and work it is to uphold and preserve all things continually, produces, by his power, a new supply of creatures in the place of those that fall off like leaves from the trees, and every day return to the dust. And whereas the earth itself, the common nurse of them all, seems, in the revolution of every year, to be at an end of its use and work, having death brought upon its face, and often entering deep into its bowels, the Spirit of God, by his influential intervention, renews it again, causing everything afresh to bring forth fruit according to its kind, giving its face a new beauty and adorning.

And this is the substance of what Scripture expressly teaches concerning the work of the Spirit of God towards the inanimate part of the creation.

His actions in reference to man, and the obedience he owed to God according to the law and covenant of his creation, must next be considered.

At his creation, man comes under a twofold notion; for he may be considered either merely *naturally*, as to the essential constitutive parts of his being, or *morally* also, with reference to his principles of obedience, the law being given to him, and the end proposed as his reward. And these things are distinctly proposed for our contemplation in the Scripture. The first is expressed in Gen. 2:7 —

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

1. There is the matter from which he was formed.
2. The quickening principle is then added to it.
3. The effect of their creation and union.

Concerning the matter from which he was formed, it is said that he came from the “dust of the ground” or dust gathered together in a heap from, and upon, the ground. (Prov. 8:26) So God, the great and universal framer of all, is presented as an artificer, who first prepared his matter, and then formed it as it seems good to him.

And this is mentioned for **two** ends —

Firstly, to set out the excellence, power, and wisdom of God, who, out of such vile, contemptible matter as a heap of dust, swept, as it were together, on the ground, could and did make so excellent, curious, and glorious a fabric as is the body of man, or as was the body of Adam before the Fall.

Secondly, to remind man of his origin, so that he might be kept humble and in a due dependence on the wisdom and bounty of his Creator; for that is how it was, and not from the original matter from which he was made, that he became so excellent. Of this, Abraham makes his solemn acknowledgment before the Lord —

“Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.” (Gen. 18:27)

He abased himself by remembering his origin. And with this, as it were, God reproached Adam for his sin and transgression —

“Thou shalt return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen. 3:19)

He let him know that, by sin, he had now lost that immortality for which he was made, and a condition he was to have enjoyed; and that his body, according to his nature and constitution, would return again to its first origin, or the dust of the earth.

Secondly, into this formed dust, God breathed the “breath of life — *divinae aerae particulam* (a vital immortal spirit). This, God breathed into him, giving him something from himself, somewhat immediately of his own, not made out of any procreated matter. This is the rational soul, or intelligent spirit. Thus man became a middle creature between the angels above and the sensitive animals below. (Ps. 8:4-5) His body was formed, like the beasts, from the matter made on the first day, and which was converted into dry land on the third day; but his soul was an immediate production of, and emanation from, the divine power, as the angels were. So when, in the works of the new creation, our blessed Saviour bestowed the Holy Spirit on his disciples, he breathed on them, as a sign that he was giving them something of his own. (Jn. 20:22) This celestial spirit, this heavenly breath, was to man a quickening principle.

Thirdly, the effect was that man became a “living soul”. His body was animated, and capable of all vital functions. Hence, he could move, eat, see, hear, etc.; for the natural effects of this breath of life are only intended by this expression. Thus the “first man Adam was made a living soul”. (1 Cor. 15:45) This was the creation of man, as to the essentially constituting principles of his nature.

With respect to his *moral condition* and principle of obedience to God, it is expressed in Gen. 1:26-27 —

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion...” And “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.”

He made him “upright” (Eccles. 7:29), perfect in his condition, in every way complete — properly disposed, and able to fulfil the obedience required of him; without weakness, disorder, disease, contradiction of principles, inclination, or reasoning. A universal rectitude of nature, consisting of light, power, and order, in his understanding, mind, and feelings, was the principal part of this image of God in which he was created. And this appears so as to the nature of the thing itself from the description the apostle gives us of the renovation of that image in us by the grace of Christ. (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10) And under both these considerations we may assess the special operations of the Spirit of God —

Firstly, as to the *essential principles* of the nature of man, it is not for nothing that God expresses his communication of a *spirit of life* by his *breathing* into him —

“God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” (Gen. 2:7)

The Spirit of God and the breath of God are the same, only the one expression is proper, the other is metaphorical; thus this breathing was a special act of the Spirit of God. The creation of the human soul, a vital immortal principle and being, was the immediate work of the Spirit of God — “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” (Job 33:4) Here, indeed, the creation and production of both the essential parts of human nature, body and soul, are ascribed to the same divine Author, for the Spirit of God and the breath of God are the same, but several effects being mentioned caused a repetition of the same cause under several names. This Spirit of God first made man, or formed his body, from the dust, then gave him that breath of life by which he became a “living soul.” So, then, under this first consideration, the creation of man is assigned to the Holy Spirit, for man was the perfection of the inferior creation; and in order to bring glory to God, by him were all other things created.

Here, then, are his operations carefully declared, to whom the perfecting and completing of all divine works is particularly committed.

Secondly, we may consider the *moral state* and condition of man, with the furniture of his mind and soul with reference to his obedience to God, and his enjoyment of him. This was the principal part of that image of God with which he was created. **Three** things were required to render man appropriate, or fit, for that life before God for which he was made —

Firstly, an *ability to discern* the mind and will of God with regard to all the duty and obedience God required of him; as also so far to know the nature and properties of God as to believe in him, the only proper object of all acts and duties of religious obedience, and an all-sufficient satisfaction and reward in this world and eternity.

Secondly, a free, uncontrolled, unentangled, *disposition* in every duty of the law of his creation, in order to live before God.

Thirdly, an *ability of mind and will*, and a readiness to respond to his feelings, and a proper and regular *performance of all duties, and abstinence from all sin*. These things belonged to the integrity of his nature, with the uprightness of the state and condition in which he was made. And all these things were the particular effects of the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit; for although this uprightness of his nature is distinguishable and separate

from the faculties of the soul of man, yet, in his first creation, they were not actually distinguished from them, nor super-added, nor infused into them when created, but were co-created with them — that is, his soul was made fit and able to live for God as his sovereign lord, chiefest good, and last end. And so they were all from the Holy Spirit, from whom the soul came, as I have already said. Yes, suppose these abilities to be super-added to man's natural faculties, as gifts supernatural (which yet is not so), they must be acknowledged in a special manner to be from the Holy Spirit; for in the restoration of these abilities to our minds, in our renovation into the image of God in the gospel, it is plainly asserted that the Holy Spirit is their immediate operator. And in this way he restores his own work, and not accept the work of another for this act: for, in the new creation, the Father, by way of authority, designs it, and brings all things to a head in Christ (Eph. 1:10), which retrieved his original special work.

The Son gave to all things a new consistency which belonged to him from the beginning. (Col. 1:17) So also the Holy Spirit renews in us the image of God, the original implantation of which was his special work. And thus Adam may be said to have had the Spirit of God in his innocence. He had him in these particular effects of his power and goodness; and he had him according to the tenor of that covenant by which it was possible that he should utterly lose him, and as it came to pass. He had him not by special inhabitation, for the whole world was then the temple of God. In the covenant of grace, founded in the Person, and on the mediation, of Christ, it is otherwise. On whoever the Spirit of God is bestowed for the renovation of the image of God in him, he abides with him forever. But in all men, from first to last, all goodness, righteousness, and truth, are the "fruit of the Spirit". (Eph. 5:9)

The works of God having come to an end, and the whole frame of nature set as it were upon its wheels, it was not deserted by the Spirit of God; for as the preservation, continuing, and acting of all things in the universe, according to their special nature and mutual application of one to another, are all from the powerful and efficient influences of divine Providence, so there are particular operations of the Holy Spirit in and about all things, whether merely natural and animal, or also rational and moral. An instance of each kind may suffice. For the first (as we have shown), the propagation of the succeeding generations of creatures, and the annual renovation of the face of the earth, are ascribed to him (Ps. 104:30); for as we would own the proper and just powers and operations of second causes, so we abhor the atheism that ascribes to them an original and independent power and cause, without a previous acting in, by, and upon them by the power of God. And this is here ascribed to the Spirit, whom God sent forth to that end and purpose. As for rational and moral actions, such as the great affairs of the world consist in and are disposed of, he has in them also a particular efficiency. Thus those great virtues of wisdom, courage, and fortitude, which have been used for the production of great effects in the world, are of his special operation. So when God stirred up men to rule and govern his people of old, to fight against and subdue their enemies, it is said that the Spirit of God came upon them —

"The Spirit of the LORD came upon Othniel, and he judged Israel, and went out to war." (Judg. 3:10)

The Spirit of God endued him with wisdom for government, and with courage and skill in the conduct of war. See Judg. 6:34.

And although instances of this kind are given us principally among the people of God, yet, wherever men in the world have been raised up to do great and wonderful things, and by which God executes his judgements, and fulfils any of his promises or his threats, even they also have received the special gifts and assistance of the Holy Spirit of God. For this

reason was Cyrus expressly called “God’s anointed”. (Is. 45:1) Cyrus had, by God’s design, a great and mighty work to do. He would utterly ruin and destroy the great, ancient, Babylonian monarchy. God had a concern in this, for the avenging of the quarrel of his people, and then the accomplishment of many promises and threats. The work itself was great, arduous, and insuperable to ordinary human abilities. Therefore, God “sends his Spirit” to fill Cyrus with wisdom, courage, and skill in all military affairs, that he might go on successfully with the work, under the providence of God. Hence is he called “God’s anointed” because the unction of kings of old was an instituted sign of the communication of the gifts of the Holy Spirit for their government. See Is. 45:1-4.

Other instances of a similar kind might be given. Thus, when the church was to have a blessed restoration of the worship of God after the return of the people from their captivity, Zerubbabel was, in a special way, called to begin and carry on this work of the building of the temple. But the difficulties he had to deal with were great, and appeared insuperable. The people were few and poor, and the opposition made to them and their work was great and plentiful, especially what came from the power of the Persian monarchy, under whose rule and oppression they were; for although they had permission and encouragement from Cyrus to do their work, yet, immediately at his death, they were oppressed again, and their “work caused to cease.” (Ezra 4:23) This power they could no way confront; yet God told them that all this opposition would be removed and conquered.

“Who art thou,” saith he, “O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain,” (Zech. 4:7)

“All the hindrance that arose from that great mountain of the Persian empire shall be removed out of the way, and the progress of Zerubbabel in his work shall be made smooth, plain, and easy.” But how could this be effected and brought about? “Not by an army or ‘by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts” (verse 6) — You would suppose that it must be done by armies and open force, in which you are altogether insufficient; but this is not the way I will take in this matter. My Spirit shall work in their hearts, minds, and counsels, that, contrary to your fears, they shall themselves further that work which, up till now, they have impeded; and he will work in the minds and counsels of others to oppose them and entangle them where they would hinder it, until they are destroyed, and that great mountain be fully removed — as, indeed, it came to pass. So the providential alterations that are brought about in the world are the effects of his power and efficiency also.

And thus we have taken a short view of the dispensing and works of the Spirit of God in the *first creation*. But the effect was a state of things that quickly passed away, and was of no advantage to the church after the entrance of sin. What belongs to it is but sparingly delivered in the Scriptures; the true sense of what is delivered depended much on the analogy of the following works of God in man’s renovation and recovery. But as to the *new creation* (which we will consider in the next chapter, and which alone is directly intended for us), the *foundation*, *building up*, and *finishing the church of God*, being the things on which *depend* the principal manifestation of the glory of God, and where the great concerns of all the elect lie, as they are more fully and directly declared in Scripture; and in reference to them, we shall find a full, distinct declaration of the whole *dispensing and work of the Spirit of God*.

CHAPTER 5

THE WAY AND MANNER OF THE DIVINE DISPENSING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dispensing of the Spirit to be learned from Scripture alone — Its general adjuncts — The administration of the Spirit, and his own application of himself to his work, how expressed — The Spirit, how and in what sense given and received — What is included in the giving of the Spirit — What in receiving of him — Privilege and advantage in receiving the Spirit — How God is said to send the Spirit — What is included in his sending — How God ministers the Spirit — How God is said to put his Spirit in us — What is meant by that expression — The Spirit, how poured out — What is included and intended by this — The ways of the Spirit's application of himself to his work — His proceeding from Father and Son explained — How he comes to us — His falling upon men — His resting — How, and in what sense, he is said to depart from anyone — Of the distributions of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 2:4) — Exposition of them defended.

BEFORE we deal with the special operations, works, and effects of the Holy Spirit in and on the *new creation*, the order of things requires that we should first say something of the *general nature* of God's dispensing of him, and of his own application of himself to his actions and workings in this matter; for this is the foundation of all that he does, and this, for our edification, we are instructed by the Scriptures. To them, in this whole discourse, we must diligently attend; for we are exercised in such a subject where we have no rule, nor guide, nor anything to give us assistance but pure revelation. And what I have to offer concerning these things consists in the matter solely in explaining those passages of Scripture where they are revealed. We must, therefore, consider —

1. What we are taught on the part of God the Father, with regard to the Holy Spirit and his work.
2. What relates immediately to himself.

God's disposal of the Spirit in his work is expressed in **five** ways in Scripture.

For he is said —

1. To give or bestow him.
2. To send him.
3. To minister him.
4. To pour him out.
5. To put him within us.

And his own application of himself to his work is likewise expressed in **five** ways.

For he is said —

1. To proceed.
2. To come, or come upon.
3. To fall on men.
4. To rest and remain.
5. To depart.

These things, containing the *general manner* of his administration and dispensing, must first be addressed.

Firstly, he is said to be *given* by God; that is, by God the Father, who is said to *give* him in a special way — “Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him” (Lk. 11:13; Jn. 3:34; 1 Jn. 3:24); “He hath given the Spirit unto us” (Jn. 14:16); “The Father shall give you another Comforter”, “which is the Holy Spirit” (verse 26). And in answer to this act of God, those on whom he is bestowed are said to receive him — “This he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive” (Jn. 7:39); “We have received the Spirit which is of God” (1 Cor. 2:12); “If ye receive another Spirit, which ye have not received...” — (2 Cor. 11:4), where the receiving of the Spirit is made something common to all believers. See Gal. 3:2; Acts 8:15, 19; Jn. 14:17, 20:22. These two — giving and receiving — are related, the one supposing the other. And this expression of the dispensing of the Holy Spirit is irreconcilable with the opinion which I rejected earlier — namely, that he is nothing but a transient accident, or an occasional emanation of the power of God. For how, or in what sense, can an act of the power of God be given by him or be received by us? It can, indeed, in no sense be either the object of God’s giving or of our receiving, especially as this is explained in those other expressions of the same thing we have come across, and afterwards considered. It must be something that has a subsistence of its own that is thus given and received. So the Lord Christ is frequently said to be given by God and received by us. It is true, it may be said, in another sense, as to “receive the grace of God”, which is the objection of the Socinians to this consideration, and the constant practice they use in evading the plain testimonies of Scripture: for if they can find any words in them used elsewhere in another sense, they suppose it sufficient to contradict their plain design and proper meaning in another place. Thus we are exhorted by the apostle “not to receive the grace of God in vain.” (2 Cor. 6:1)

I answer that the grace of God can be considered in **two** ways —

1. *Objectively*, for the revelation or doctrine of grace, as in Tit. 2:11-12. So we are said to receive him when we believe and profess it, in opposition to those by whom it is opposed and rejected. And this is the same as our receiving the Word preached, so often mentioned in Scripture (Acts 2:41; Jas. 1:21), which is by faith, to give it a place in our hearts, which is the meaning of the word in this passage. (2 Cor. 6:1) Having taken the profession of the doctrine of grace, that is, of the gospel, to ourselves, we ought to express its power in holiness and suitable obedience, without which it will be of no use or benefit to us.

And the grace of God is sometimes —

2. Taken *subjectively* for the grace which God is pleased to communicate to us, or gracious qualities that he works in our souls by his Spirit. In this sense, also, we are sometimes said to receive it — “Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1 Cor. 4:7), and where the apostle speaks both of the

gifts and graces of the Spirit. And the reason for that is because, in the communication of internal grace to us, we contribute nothing in our procurement of it, but are merely capable recipient subjects. And this grace is a *quality* or spiritual habit, permanent and abiding in the soul. But in neither of these senses can we be said to receive the Spirit of God, nor God to give him, if he is only the power of God, making an impression on our minds and spirits — no more than a man can be said to *receive the sunbeams*, which warm him up by their natural power, and their falling on him. Much less can the giving and receiving of the Spirit be so interpreted, considering what is said of his being sent and his own coming, with similar declarations of God's dispensing of him. More of this we shall see later.

Now, this *giving of the Spirit*, as it is the *act* of him by whom he is given, denotes *authority*, *freedom*, and *bounty*; and, on the part of those that receive him, *privilege* and *advantage*.

(1) *Authority*. He who *gives* anything has *authority* to dispose of it. None can give but what is his own, and over which, in some sense, he has in his power. Now, the Father is said to give the Spirit, and that upon our request, as in Lk. 11:13. This, I acknowledge, does not lack some difficulty in its explanation; for if the Holy Spirit is God himself, as has been declared, how can he be said to be given by the Father, as it were, by way of authority? But keeping ourselves to the sacred rule of truth, we may solve this problem without curiosity or danger.

Wherefore —

(2) The *order of the subsistence* of the three Persons in the divine nature is involved here; for the Father, as I have shown, is the fountain and origin of the Trinity, the Son being of him, and the Spirit of them both. Hence, he is to be considered as the principal author and cause of all those works which are immediately done by either of them; for of whom the Son and Spirit have their essence, as to their personality, from him have they life and power of operation. (Jn. 5:19, 26) Therefore, when the Holy Spirit *comes* to anyone, the Father is said to *give* him, for he is the Spirit of the Father. And this authority of the Father immediately respects the work itself, and not the Person working; but the Person is said to be given for the work's sake.

(3) The *economy* of the blessed Trinity in the work of our redemption and salvation is with respect to this order of things. Its fountain lies in the love, wisdom, grace, and counsel of the Father. Whatever is done in its pursuit is originally the gift of the Father because it is designed for no other end but to make his grace effective. Hence, he is said to send and give his Son also. And the whole work of the Holy Spirit, as our sanctifier, guide, comforter, and advocate, is to make the love of the Father effective for us. (Jn. 16:13- 14) As to this, out of his own love and care, he has condescended, and the fountain of it is the love and purpose of the Father; and in making them effective, this being their end, the Spirit is rightly said to be given from the Father.

(4) In the whole communication of the Spirit, I note his *effects*, or the *ends* for which he is given. What these ends are I will deal with later. Now, the authority for this giving is with regard mainly to his gifts and graces which depend on the authority of the Father.

2. This expression denotes *freedom*. What is given can be withheld. This is the "gift of God" (as he is called in Jn. 4:10), not the purchase of our efforts, nor the reward of our deserts. Some men wrongly delight to talk of their purchasing grace and glory; but the one and the other are to be "bought without money and without price." (Is. 55:1) Even "eternal life" itself, the end of all our obedience, is the "gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) Scripture knows of no earnings that men can make for themselves but death;

for as Augustine says, *Quicquid tuum est peccatum est* (Whatever is yours is sin), and we find that “the wages of sin is death.” (Rom. 6:23) To what end or purpose the Spirit is bestowed upon us, whether it is for the communication of grace, or the distribution of gifts, or for consolation and refreshment, it is alone a gift of God from his absolute and sovereign freedom. We are said to *receive* him, for as a *gift* he is bestowed, as we see in the testimonies given above.

And, in *receiving*, **two** things are implied —

1. That we contribute nothing in the receiving of something as a *gift*. Receiving corresponds to giving, and that implies freedom on the part of the Giver.

2. That it is their privilege and advantage; for whatever a man receives, he does so for his own good. First of all, then, we have the Spirit freely given as a gift of God; for to receive him generally is to be made partaker of him, as to those ends for which he is given by God. Be those ends what they will, with regard to them, they are said to receive the Spirit, and made partakers of him.

Two things are pleaded by our opponents to take off the freedom of this gift and of our reception, and to base it on something necessary and required on our part.

For —

(1) Our Saviour tells us “that the world cannot receive him, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.” (Jn. 14:17) Now, if the “world” cannot receive him, there must be an ability and preparation in those who do so, who are “not of the world”; and so the gift and communication of the Spirit depends on that qualification in us. But all men are naturally alike in the world and who are of it. No one by nature has more ability or strength in spiritual things than another; for all are equally “dead in trespasses and sins”, all equally “children of wrath”. (Eph.2:1) It must, therefore, be asked how come some have this ability and power to receive the Spirit of God, when others have not. Now this, as I shall fully prove later, is merely from the Holy Spirit himself and his grace, with respect only to the order of his operations in us, some being preparatory for, and dispositive to, others; one being instituted as the means of obtaining another, the whole being the effect of the free gift of God; for we do not make ourselves differ from others, nor have we anything that we have not received. (1 Cor. 4:7) Therefore, the receiving of the Holy Spirit intended in that expression of our Saviour, with regard to some who are able to receive him and some not, is not absolute, but with regard to some certain work and end; and this, as is plain in the context, is the receiving of him as a comforter and a guide in spiritual truth. Thus, faith in Christ Jesus, which also is an effect and fruit of the same Spirit, is previous required. In this sense, therefore, believers alone can receive him, and are enabled to do so by the grace they have received from him at first in their conversion to God.

But —

(2) It will be objected also that we are bound to pray for him before we receive him; and therefore the bestowing of him depends on a condition which is to be fulfilled by us; for the promise is that —

“...our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” (Lk. 11:13)

But this does not prove the bestowing and receiving of him is not absolutely free. No, it proves the contrary. It is *gratia indebita* (undeserved grace) that is the proper object of prayer. And God, by these encouraging promises, does not go against the liberty of his own will, nor take anything away from the freedom of his gifts and graces, but only directs us to the way by which we may be made partakers of them, to his glory and our own advantage. And this also belongs to the order of the communication of the grace of the Spirit to us. This very praying for the Spirit is a duty we cannot perform without his assistance — for “no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:3) He helps us, as the Spirit of grace and supplication, to pray for him as a Spirit of joy and consolation.

3. Another objection is that this is such a gift as, in God, proceeds from *bounty*; for God is said to give him unto us “richly”. (Tit. 3:6)

This will be dealt with in the fourth way of his communication: only I say at present, that the greatness of a gift, the free mind of the giver, and a lack of desert or merit in the receiver, are what declare bounty to be the spring and fountain of it; and all these concur to the height in God’s giving of the Holy Spirit. Again, on the part of those who receive this gift, *privilege* and *advantage* are intimated. They receive a gift, and that from God, and that a great and singular gift comes from divine bounty. Some, indeed, receive him in a way as to some ends and purposes, without any advantage finally to their own souls. So do those who “prophesy” and “cast out devils” by his power, in the name of Christ, and yet, continuing to be “workers of iniquity” (Lk. 13:27), are rejected at the last day. (Mat. 7:22-23) Thus it is with all who receive his gifts alone, without his grace to sanctify their persons and their gifts; and this whether they are ordinary or extraordinary: but this is only by accident. There is no gift of the Holy Spirit but is good in its own nature, tending to a good end, and is proper for the good and advantage of those by whom it is received. And although the direct end of some of them brings no spiritual good to those on whom they are bestowed, but are for the edification of others.

For —

“...the manifestation of the Spirit is given unto every man to profit withal.” (1 Cor. 12:7)

Yet there is excellence and worth in them, and that use may be made of them so as to turn greatly to the advantage of those who receive them. For although they are not graces, yet they serve to stir up and give an edge to grace, and to draw it out when it is exercised, by which it is strengthened and increased. And they have an influence all the way to glory, for it is by the abilities which they give that some are made wise and effective instruments for —

...the “turning of many to righteousness”, who “shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.” (Dan. 12:3)

But the unbelief, ingratitude, and lusts of men can spoil these and any other good thing too. And these things will afterwards, in particular, come under our consideration. In general, to be made partaker of the Holy Spirit is an inestimable privilege and advantage, and, as such, is proposed by our Saviour. (Jn. 14:17)

Secondly, God is said to *send* him — “Thou sendest forth thy Spirit” (Ps. 104:30); “The Father will send the Holy Spirit in my name.” (Jn. 14:26) This is also said by the Son — “I will send unto you the Comforter from the Father” (chapters 15:26, 16:7). And in the accomplishment of that promise, it is said he “shed him forth” (Acts 2:33; Gal. 4:6) — “God

hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts”, and in other passages the same expression is used. Now, this, in the matter, is the same as the former, of giving him, arguing for the same authority, the same freedom, the same bounty. Only, the word naturally includes in its meaning a respect to a local action. He who is sent removes from the place where he was, from where he is sent, to a place where he was not found before, and from where he was sent. Now, this cannot properly be said of the Holy Spirit; for he, being God by nature, is naturally omnipresent, and omnipresence is inconsistent with a locality. So the Psalmist expresses it —

“Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven...” etc. (Ps. 139:7-8)

Therefore, a metaphor must be allowed in this expression, but such a one as Scripture, by the frequent use of it, has become familiar to us. Thus, God is said to “come out of his place”, to “bow the heavens and come down”, to “come down and see what is done in the earth”. (Is. 26:21; Ps. 144:5; Gen. 18:21) That these things are not spoken literally of God, who is immense, everyone acknowledges. But when God begins to work in any place, in any way, where before he did not do so, he is said to *come* there; for this is true of us — we must come to a place before we can work in it.

Thus, the sending of the Holy Spirit includes **two** things to be added to his being given —

(1) That he was not before in or with that person, or among those persons, for that special work and end which he was sent for. He may be in them and with them in one respect, and afterward be said to be sent to them in another. So our Lord Jesus Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples as a Comforter, whom they had received before as a sanctifier.

“I will,” says he, “send him unto you; and ye know him, for he dwelleth with you.” (Jn. 14:17, 16:7)

He did so as a sanctifier before he came to them as a comforter. But, in his every coming, he is sent for one special work or another; and this sufficiently shows that, in his gifts and graces, he does not work with all. Such a supposition would leave no place for this special act of sending him, which is done by choice and distinction as to the object. Much less is he a light which is always in all men (as the Quakers teach), and which all men may be take advantage of as they please; for this light neither is, nor can be, absent in any sense from anyone at any time.

2. It denotes a special work there, or on them, where and on whom there was none before of that kind. For this cause, he is said to be sent by the Father. No local motion, then, is intended in this expression, only there is an allusion to it; for as a creature cannot produce any effects where it does not exist until it is either sent there or goes there of its own accord, so the Holy Spirit does not produce the blessed effects of his power and grace except in and towards those to whom he is given and sent by the Father. How, in answer to this, he is said himself to come, I shall explain later. And it is the Person of the Spirit who is said to be thus sent; for this belongs to that holy dispensation of the several Persons of the Trinity in the work of our salvation. And here, the Spirit, in all his operations, is considered as sent by the Father, for the reasons I have already given.

Thirdly, God is said to *minister* the Spirit — “He that ministereth to you the Spirit.” (Gal. 3:5) — “He that giveth you continual or abundant supplies of the Spirit.” To *minister* is “to give a sufficiency of anything”, and “a sufficiency of provision”. An addition, therefore, is to

minister through the communication of the Spirit — “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayers” (Phil. 1:19), “and the additional supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” That Spirit and his assistance he had received earlier, but he yet stood in need of a daily further supply. So is the word used constantly for the adding of one thing to another, or one degree of the same thing to another — “Add to your faith virtue” (2 Pet. 1:5), or, “In your faith make an increase of virtue.” When, therefore, God is said to “minister the Spirit”, it is his continual giving out of additional supplies of his grace by his Spirit that is meant; for the Holy Spirit is a voluntary agent, and distributes to everyone as he will. When, therefore, he is given and sent to anyone, his operations are limited by his own will and the will of him who sends him; and therefore we stand in need of supplies of him, and from him, which is the principal subject-matter of our prayers in this world.

Fourthly, God is said to *put* his Spirit in or upon men; and this also belongs to the manner he is dispensed — “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; I have put my Spirit upon him.” (Is. 42:1) The word “put” is also translated — “I have given my Spirit upon him”. The AV is translated by “put”, where in Ezek. 37:14, “in you” is added — “put my Spirit in you”. The same is clearly intended in Is. 63:11 — “that put his Holy Spirit in the midst of them.” Hence, “I have given”, or “I will give”. See also Is. 42:1. See also Mat. 12:18 — “I will put my Spirit upon him.” The word *put*, then, used in this sense, does not denote the granting or donation of anything, but its actual bestowing. And it is the effective action of God in this matter that is meant. He does not only give and send his Spirit to them to whom he designs so great a benefit and privilege, but he actually pours out and bestows him upon them. He does not send him to them, and leave it to their will and power whether they will receive him or not, but he so effectively pours him out, and puts him in them or upon them so that they are actually made partakers of him. He powerfully endows their hearts and minds with him, for the work and end which he has designed. See Ex. 31:6 — “I have put wisdom” is as much as saying, “I have filled them with wisdom” (verse 2). So, then, where God intends to give anyone the benefit of his Spirit, he will actually and effectively pour him out upon them. He does not, indeed, always do this in the same way. Sometimes, he does it, as it were, by surprise, when those who receive him are neither aware of it nor particularly desire it. So the Spirit of the Lord, as a Spirit of prophecy, came upon Saul when his mind was remote and estranged from any such thoughts. In the same way, the Spirit of God came upon Eldad and Medad in the camp, when the other elders went out to the tabernacle to receive him. (Num. 11:27) And so the Spirit of prophecy came on most of the prophets of old, without either expecting him or being prepared on their part. So Amos gives an account of his call to his office —

“I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: and the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy.” (Amos 7:14-15)

He was not brought up with any expectation of receiving this gift, and he had no preparation for it; but God surprised him with his call and gift as he followed the flock. Such, also, was the call of Jeremiah, in Jer. 1:5-7. Vain is the discourse of Moses Maimonides on this subject, prescribing various natural and moral preparations for the receiving of this gift. But these things of the Spirit were extraordinary. Yet I no way doubt that God still continues to work grace in many with such unexpected surprises, the manner of which I shall inquire into later. But sometimes, as to some gifts and graces, God bestows his Spirit where there is some preparation and cooperation on our part; but wherever he designs to put or place him, he does so effectively.

Fifthly, God is said to *pour* him out, and that frequently — “Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you” (Prov. 1:23), *ebullire more scaturiginis* (to bubble up like a fountain). Hence, the words are rendered by Theodotion “*Scaturire faciam*” — “I will cause my Spirit to spring

out unto you as a fountain.” And it is frequently applied to speaking, which it signifies.” See Ps. 78:2, 145:7; Prov. 1:23 where we find the same meaning. And the word has a double lively metaphor: for the *proceeding* of the Spirit from the Father is compared with the continual rising of the waters of a living spring; and his *communication* to us to the overflowing of those waters, yet guided by the will and wisdom of God — “Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field” (Is. 32:15). It means, indeed, sometimes “to pour out”, but more properly and more commonly “to uncover”, “to make bare”, “to reveal” — “Until the Spirit be revealed from on high.” There shall be such a plentiful communication of the Spirit as that he and his work shall be made open, revealed, and plain; or, the Spirit shall be “bared”, as God is said to make his arm bare when he works mightily and effectively. (Is. 52:10) “I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” (Is. 44:3) The word used here is to pour a thing out so that it cleaves to, and rests on, that on which it is poured out; as the Spirit of God abides with those to whom he is communicated. “I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel.” (Ezek. 39:29) There is another word that means properly to pour out, and that in a plentiful manner, and is the same word that is used in that great promise in Joel 2:28, “*effundam*” (copiously), and “I will pour out my Spirit” (Acts 2:17); and the same thing is again expressed by the same word — “On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 10:45)

Let us, then, briefly consider the importance of this expression, where **two** things may be observed concerning it in general; such as —

1. Wherever it is used, it is directly related to the *times of the gospel*. Either it is a part of the promises concerning it, or of the story of their accomplishment under it. But, wherever it is mentioned, the time, state, and grace of the gospel are intended: for the Lord Christ was “in all things to have the pre-eminence” (Col. 1:18); and, therefore, although God gave his Spirit in some measure before, yet he did not pour him out until he was first anointed with his fullness.

2. There is a *tacit comparison* in it with some other time and season, or some other act of God in which, and by which, God gave his Spirit before, but not in the way and manner he intended now to bestow him. A *larger measure* of the Spirit to be now given more than before, or is signified by any other expressions of the same gift, is intended by this word.

Three things are therefore included in this expression —

1. An eminent act of divine *bounty*. *Pouring forth* is the way by which bounty from an all-sufficing fullness is expressed: such as “The clouds, filled with a moist vapour, pour down rain” (Job 36:27), until “it water the ridges of the earth abundantly, settling the furrows thereof, and making it soft with showers” (Ps. 65:10); which, with the things following in that place (verses 11-13), are spoken allegorically of this pouring out of the Spirit of God from above. Hence, God is said to do this richly — “The renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he hath poured on us richly” (Titus 3:6) — that is, on all believers who are converted to God; for the apostle is not discoursing on the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were then given in a plentiful manner, but of that grace of the Holy Spirit by which all that believe are regenerated, renewed, and converted to God; for so were men converted of old by a rich participation in the Holy Spirit, and so they must be still, whatever some pretend, or die in their sins. And by the same word is the bounty of God in other things expressed — “The living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” (1 Tim. 6:17)

2. This *pouring out* has respect to the *gifts* and *graces* of the Spirit, and not to his Person: for where he is given, he is given absolutely, and as for himself not more or less. But his

gifts and graces may be more plentifully and abundantly given at one time than at another, to some rather than to others. Wherefore, this expression is metonymical, that being spoken of the cause which is proper to the effect; the Spirit being said to be poured out because his graces are.

3. It has respect here to some *special works* of the Spirit. Such are the *purifying* or *sanctifying*, and the *comforting* or refreshing of them on whom he is poured. With regard to the first of these effects, he is compared both with fire and water, for both fire and water have purifying qualities in them, though towards different objects, and working in a different way. So, by fire, are metals purified and purged from their dross and mixtures; and by water are all other unclean and defiled things cleansed and purified.

Hence, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his work by his Spirit, is at once compared to a “refiner’s fire” and to “fullers’ soap” (Mal. 3:2-3), because of the purging, purifying qualities that are found in fire and water. And the Holy Spirit is expressly called a “Spirit of burning” (Is. 4:4), for by him are the vessels of the house of God that are of gold and silver refined and purged, just as those that are of wood and stone are consumed. And when it is said of our Lord Jesus that he should “baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Lk. 3:16), it is but the same thing doubly expressed; and, therefore, mention is made only of the “Holy Spirit”. (Jn. 1:33) But the Holy Spirit was, in his dispensing, to purify and cleanse them as fire does to gold and silver. And, on the same account, he is compared with water — “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean” (Ezek. 36:25), which is explained in verse 26 by — “A new spirit will I put within you”, which God calls his Spirit in verse 27. So our Saviour calls him “rivers of water” (Jn. 7:38-39). See also Is. 44:3. And it is with regard to his purifying, cleansing, and sanctifying our natures that he is called this. With respect, therefore, in a special way, he is said to be poured out. So our apostle expressly declares it in Titus 3:4-6. Again, it respects his comforting and refreshing them on those on whom he is poured. Hence, he is said to be poured down from above as rain that descends on the earth — “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground” (Is. 44:3); that is — “I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses” (verse 4). See also Is. 35:6-7. He comes upon the dry, parched, barren ground of the hearts of men with his refreshing, fruitful virtue and blessing, causing them to spring up and produce fruits in holiness and righteousness to God. (Heb. 6:7) And with respect to his communication of his Spirit, the Lord Christ is said to —

“...come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth.” (Ps. 72:6)

The good Lord gives us always of these waters and refreshing showers! And these are the ways, in general, by which the dispensing of the Spirit from God, for whatever end or purpose it be is expressed.

2. We come next to consider what is ascribed to the Spirit himself by way of *compliance* with these acts of God in which he is given and administered. Now, these are such things or actions that show him to be a *voluntary agent*, and that not only as to what he acts or does in men, but also as to the way of his coming out from God, and his application of himself to his work. And these we must consider as they are declared to us in Scripture.

The **first** and most general expression is that he *proceeds* from the Father; and being the Spirit of the Son, he proceeds from him also in the same way — “The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” (Jn. 15:26) There is a twofold “procession” of the Holy Spirit. The one is “natural” or “personal”. This expresses his eternal relation to the Persons of the Father and the Son. He is from them by an eternal

emanation or *procession*. The manner of it to us, in this life, is incomprehensible; therefore it is rejected by some, who will not believe, as it were, unless they can put their hands into the side of it. And yet are they forced, in things that appear to their eyes to admit of many things that they cannot perfectly comprehend! But we live by faith, and not by sight. (2 Cor. 5:7) This is enough for us, that we admit nothing in this great mystery but what is revealed. And nothing is revealed to us that is inconsistent with the being and subsistence of God; for this procession or emanation includes no separation or division in or of the divine nature, but only expresses a distinction in subsistence by a property peculiar to the Holy Spirit. But this is not something I intend to discuss at present. A consideration of it belongs properly to the doctrine of the Trinity, and has been handled elsewhere. (*A Brief Declaration and Defence of the Doctrine of the Trinity*)

Secondly, there is a “procession” of the Spirit which is “dispensatory.” This is the entrance of the Spirit into the application of himself to his work. It is a *voluntary act* of his will, and not a necessary property of his Person. And he is said thus to proceed from the Father because he goes forth or proceeds in pursuit of the counsels and purposes of the Father, and, sent by him to put them into execution, or to make them effective. And, in the same way, he proceeds from the Son, sent by him for the application of his grace to the souls of his elect. (Jn. 15:26) It is true that this proves his eternal relation to the Father and the Son, as he proceeds from them, or receives his particular personal subsistence from them, for that is the foundation of this order of operation; but it is his own personal voluntary action that is intended in the expression. And this is the general notation of the origin of the Spirit’s acting in all that he does. He proceeds, or comes forth, from the Father. Had it been only said that he was *given* and *sent*, it would not have been known that there was anything of his own will in what he did, whereas he is said to “divide unto every man *as he will*.” (1 Cor. 12:11) But it relates to his coming. As he *proceeds* of his own accord to do his work, his own will and condescension are also asserted. And this, his proceeding from the Father, is in compliance with his sending him to accomplish and make effective the purposes of his will and the counsels of his grace.

To the same purpose, he is said to *come* — “When the Comforter is *come*” (Jn. 15:26). “If I go not away, the Comforter will not *come*.” (Jn. 16:7) Verse 8 adds, “And when he is *come*.” So is he said to come upon specific people. We find it so expressed in 1 Chron. 12:18 — “The Spirit came upon Amasai”, and “the Spirit clothed Amasai” possessing his mind as a man’s clothes embrace him. “The Holy Spirit came on them, and they prophesied.” (Acts 19:6) “Come” is, as it were, the *terminus ad quem* (the other end) of the “going forth” or “proceeding”, for there is in these expressions an allusion to a local action, where these two words denote the beginning and the end. The first intends the *voluntary application* of himself to his work, the other his progress in it. Such condescension God stoops to in making use in the declaration of his divine actions, to accommodate them to our understanding, and give us some kind of idea of them. He proceeds from the Father, as given by him; and he comes to us, as sent by him. The meaning of both is that, the Holy Spirit, by his own will and consent, works in pursuit of the will of the Father, and what he does, something he had not done before. And as there is no local motion to be thought of in these things, so they can in no tolerable sense be reconciled to the idea of his being only the inherent virtue or an actual emanation and influence of the power of God. And by this, our faith and obedience are regulated in our dealing with God about him: for we may both pray the Father that he would give and send him to us according to his promise, and we may pray to him to come to us to sanctify and comfort us according to the work and office that he has undertaken. This is what we are taught by this; for these revelations by God are for our instruction in the obedience of faith.

Thirdly, He is said to *fall* on men —“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.” (Acts 10:44) So also in Acts 11:15, where Peter, repeating the same thing, says, “The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning” — that is, as described in Acts 2:4. A greatness and suddenness as a surprise is intended by this word “fall”; such as, when the fire fell down from heaven (which was a type of him) upon the altar and sacrifice of Elijah, The people that saw it were amazed, and, falling on their faces, cried out, “The LORD he is the God!” (1 Kings 18:38-39) When men are no way in expectation of such a gift, or when they have an expectation in general, but are suddenly surprised as to the particular event, it is so described. But wherever this word is used, some extraordinary effects as an evidence of his presence and power immediately resulted (Acts 10:44-46); and so it was at the beginning of his being poured out under the New Testament. (Acts 2:4, 8:16)

Fourthly, having come, he is said to *rest* on those to whom he was given and sent — “And the Spirit of the LORD shall *rest* upon him.” (Is. 11:2) This is translated as “abiding” and “remaining”. (See Jn. 1:32-33) We find, “The Spirit of the LORD rested upon the elders.” (Num. 11:25-26) So the “spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha” (2 Kings 2:15), and in 1 Pet. 4:14, “The Spirit of glory and of God resteth on you.”

Two things are included here —

1. Complacency.
2. Permanency.

Firstly, he is well-pleased in his work in which he rests. So where God is said to “rest in his love”, he does it with “joy” and “singing”. (Zeph. 3:17) So too does the Spirit rejoice wherever he remains.

Secondly, he “abides” where he rests. Under this idea, is this acting of the Spirit promised by our Saviour — “He shall abide with you for ever”. (Jn. 14:16) He came only upon some men by a sudden surprise, to act in them, and, by them, do some special work and duty. To this end, he only transiently affected their minds with his power; but where he is said to rest, as in the works of sanctification and consolation, there he abides and continues with complacency and delight.

Fifthly, he is said to *depart* from some people. So it was said of Saul in 1 Sam. 16:14 — “The Spirit of the LORD departed from him.” And David prayed that God would not “take his Holy Spirit from him.” (Ps. 51:11) And this is understood answerably to what we have said before about his coming and his being sent. As he is said to come, so he is said to depart; and as he is said to be sent, so he is said to be taken away. His departure from men, therefore, is his ceasing to work in them, and on them, as formerly; and as far as this is penal [punishable], he is said to be taken away. So he departed and was taken away from Saul, when he no more helped him with that ability for kingly rule which he exercised before with his assistance. And this departure of the Holy Spirit from anyone is either total or partial only. Some on whom he had been bestowed for the working of various gifts for the good of others, by light and general assistance, with many convictions for the performance of duties, he then utterly deserted, and gave them up to themselves and the lusts of their own hearts. Examples of this are common in the world. Men who have been made partakers of many “gifts of the Holy Spirit”, and have been in a special way enlightened, and, under the power of their convictions, carried out their profession of the gospel and the performance of many religious duties, yet become entangled by temptations, and overcome by the power of their lusts, relinquish all their beginnings and engagements, and turn wholly to sin and folly. From such people the Holy Spirit utterly

departs, and all their gifts dry up and wither, and their light goes out, and they have darkness instead of a vision.

The case of such is deplorable; for “it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” (2 Pet. 2:21) And some of these add spite and contempt to that whole work of the Spirit of God, of whom they themselves were made partakers, falling right into apostasy. And the condition of such profligate sinners is, for the most part, irrecoverable. (Heb. 6:4-6, 10:26-30) From some, he withdraws and departs *partially* only, and that mostly for a season; and this departure respects the grace, light, and consolation that he administers to believers, as to the degree of them, and the sense of them, in their own souls.

On those whom he is bestowed to work these things in a saving way, from them he never utterly or totally departs. This, our blessed Saviour plainly promises and asserts —

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”
(Jn. 4:14)

That this well of “living water” is his sanctifying Spirit is declared in Jn. 7:37-39. Whoever has received him shall never have a thirst of total need and destitution anymore. Besides, he is given for this end by virtue of the covenant of grace; and the promise is given there that he will “never depart from them” to whom he is given. (Is. 59:21; Jer. 31:33, 32:39-40; Ezek. 11:19-20) But now, as to the degree and conscious effect of these operations, he may depart and withdraw from believers for a season. Hence, they may be left in much spiritual decay and great weakness, when the things of grace that remain in them being, as it were, “ready to die” (Rev. 3:2); and they may feel themselves deserted and forsaken by God — as did Zion (Is. 40:27, 49:14): for at such times, God “hides himself,” or “forsakes his people for a small moment”. (Is. 54:7-8) He “hideth himself, and is wroth”. (Is. 57:17) These are the things that David so often, and so bitterly, complained of, and for which, with so much earnestness, he contended and wrestled with God to be delivered from. Here lie those spiritual desertions which some lately have spoken of with reproach, contempt, and scorn, when, they say that all the apprehensions and complaints of the people of God about them represent nothing but the idle imaginations of disordered brains, or the effects of some disorder in their blood, or low animal spirits.

I could, indeed, easily allow that men might despise and laugh at what is declared as the *experience* of those that profess the faith at present — their prejudice against them will not allow them to entertain any thoughts of them but which are suited to folly and hypocrisy — but, at this, I acknowledge, I stand amazed, that whereas these things are so plainly, so fully, and so frequently declared in the Scriptures, both as to the actions of God and his Holy Spirit in them, and as to the sense of those concerned about them. The whole of God’s dealings, and believers’ application of themselves to him in this matter, are so graphically exemplified in many of the holy saints of old, such as Job, David, Heman, and others; and great and plentiful provision is made in the Scripture for the direction, recovery, healing, and consolation of souls in such a condition. Yet men, professing themselves to be Christians, and believing that the Word of God at least is not a fable, should dare to cast such abusive reproaches on the ways and works of God! The end of these attempts can be none other but to decry all real communion between God and the souls of men, leaving only an external form or shape of religion, not one jot better than atheism.

Neither is it only what concerns *spiritual desertion*, whose nature, causes, and remedies, are professedly and at large handled by all the casuistic [divisive] divines found in the Roman church, but the whole work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men, with all the effects produced in them with regard to sin and grace, that some men, by their odious and scurrilous expressions, try to expose them to contempt and scorn. Whatever trouble comes to the minds of men on account of a sense of the guilt of sin; whatever darkness and depression they may undergo through the displeasure of God, and his withdrawal of the needful influences of his grace, love, and favour towards them; whatever peace, comfort, or joy, they may be made partakers of, by a sense of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5) — it is all ascribed, in most abusive language, to melancholy smells and vapours, when a certain and mechanical account is given by those who understand the working of the brain. To such a height of profane atheism is the daring pride and ignorance of some in our days!

There remains yet one general *adjunct* of the dispensing and work of the Holy Spirit, which gives a further description of the manner of it, which I have left under a single consideration. This is what is mentioned in Heb. 2:4 — “God bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit.” But gifts are “distributions” or “partitions”; and hence advantage is taken by some to argue against his very being. So Crellius contends that the Holy Spirit here is taken passively, or that the expression “Holy Spirit” is *genitivus materiae* (a genitive construction). Wherefore, he supposes that it follows that the Holy Spirit himself may be divided into parts, so that one may have one part and parcel of him, and another may have yet another part. How inconsistent this is with the truth of his being and personality is clear enough. But yet neither can he give any tolerable account of the division and partition of that power of God that he calls the “Holy Spirit”, unless he makes the Holy Spirit to be a quality in us and not in the divine nature, as Justin Martyr affirmed Plato to have done, and thus to be divided. And the interpretation he uses of the words is wrested, perverse, and foolish; for the context of them requires that the Holy Spirit be here taken actively as the author of the distribution mentioned. He gives out his gifts and powers to men in many parts, not all to one, not all at once, not all in one way; but some to one, some to another, some at one time, some at another, and that in great variety. The apostle, therefore, in this passage declares that the Holy Spirit gave out various gifts to the first preachers of the gospel for the confirmation of their doctrine, according to the promise of our Saviour. (Jn. 15:26-27)

Of these, he mentions in particular —

Firstly, “signs”; that is, miraculous works, done to signify the presence of God by his power with those that performed them, so giving his approval of the doctrine they taught.

Secondly, “prodigies” or “wonders”; works beyond the power of nature or energy, of natural causes, performed to fill men with wonder and admiration, manifesting God, and surprising men with a sense of his presence.

Thirdly, “mighty works” of several kinds, such as the opening of the eyes of the blind, the raising of the dead, and such like. These having been mentioned, there is added in general the words “gifts of the Holy Spirit”; for these and other similar things the Holy Spirit worked and effected for the end mentioned. And these distributions are from him as the signs and wonders were — that is, effects of his power: only there is added an intimation *how* they are all brought about by him; which is, by giving them a power for their operation, variously dividing them among those on whom they were bestowed; and that, as is added, “according unto his own will.” And this passage is so directly and fully expounded in 1 Cor. 12:7-11 that there is no room for argument left for the most obstinate; and that passage, having been referred to before at the beginning of this discourse, I shall

not go over it again. These, therefore, are his “gifts”; which, as part and parcel of his work, he gives out in great variety.

For the same purpose, his operations are described in Is. 11:2-3 —

“The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.”

He is first called “The Spirit of the LORD” to show his being and nature; and then he is termed “the Spirit of wisdom and of counsel...” — that is, he who is the author of wisdom and counsel, and the rest of the graces mentioned, who divides and distributes them according to his own will. That variety of gifts and graces with which believers are endowed and adorned are these “gifts”, or “distributions”, of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the principal regard we pay him immediately in our worship of him under the New Testament, which is so because he is the author of these various gifts and graces. So John, greeting the churches of Asia, prays for grace for them from God the Father, and from “the seven Spirits which are before his throne” (Rev. 1:4); that is, from the Holy Spirit of God considered in his care of the church and his yielding supplies to her, as the author of that perfection of gifts and graces which are, and are to be, bestowed upon her. That is what the number “seven” means. And, therefore, whereas our Lord Jesus Christ, as the foundation of his church, was anointed with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit in their perfection, it is said that on that one stone should be “seven eyes” (Zech. 3:9) — all the gifts of the seven Spirits of God, or of that Holy Spirit who is the author of them all.

Objection

All, then, that is pleaded for the *division of the Holy Spirit* from this passage is built on the supposition that we earlier rejected — namely, that he is not a divine person, but an arbitrary emanation of divine power. And yet neither can the division of the Holy Spirit be argued for, with any tolerable sense maintained. Crellius says, indeed —

“That all divine inspirations may be considered as one whole, as many waters make up one sea. In this respect the Holy Spirit is one — that is, one universal made up of many species.”

This is his *totum logicum* (total logic). And so the Spirit may be divided into his subordinate species! But what ground or colour is there for any such idea in the Scripture? Where is it said that all the gifts of the Holy Spirit constitute, or make up, one Holy Spirit? Or the Holy Spirit is one in general, because many effects are ascribed to him? Or that the several gifts of the Spirit are so many distinct kinds of it? The opposite to all these is expressly taught — namely, that the one Holy Spirit works all these things as he pleases; so that they are all of them external acts of his will and power. And it is to little purpose pleaded by the same author —

“That he is divided as a natural whole into its parts, because there is mention of a measure and portion of him: so God is said not to give him to Jesus Christ ‘by measure’ (Jn. 3:34); and to every one of us is given grace ‘according to the measure of the gift of Christ’ (Eph. 4:7)”

Answer

It is as though one measure of him was granted to one, and another measure to another! But this “measure” is plainly concerning his gifts and graces. These were bestowed on the

Lord Christ in all their fullness, without any limitation either as to kinds or degrees, poured into him according to the utmost extent and capacity of human nature, and that under an inconceivable advancement of his union with the Son of God. Others receive his gifts and graces in a limited proportion, both as to their kinds and degrees. To turn this into a division of the Spirit himself is the greatest madness. And putting aside prejudice, there is no difficulty in understanding that saying of God to Moses in Num. 11:17 —

“I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and I will put it upon the elders.”

For it evidently refers to the gifts of the Spirit, enabling men to rule and govern, that God is speaking, and not of the Spirit himself. Without any diminution of that Spirit in him — that is, of the gifts that he had received — God gave to them, as lighting their candle by his flame. And so, also, the “double portion of the spirit of Elijah” which Elisha requested for himself, was only a large and special measure of prophetic light, above what other prophets that he left behind him had received. (2 Kings 2:9) He was asking for “*os duorum*” (two mouthed) or “*duplex*” (two of something). This expression is first used in Deut. 21:17, where the double portion of the first-born is intended; so that probably it was such a portion among the other prophets as the first-born had among the brothers of the same family which he desired: and so it came to pass, for he also had the rule and government over them.